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Patterns of Montana's towns, 1860 to 1920

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PATTERNS OF MONTANA'S TOWNS

1860 TO 1920

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Between 1860 and 1920, Montana was transformed from a recently explored wilderness area inhabited by migratory Indian tribes, to a populated western state with numerous urban centers.[1] Indian encampments yielded to frontier forts, primitive mining camps, small towns, and eventually centers approaching and exceeding 40,000 inhabitants. These towns are of interest to the geographer because they are distinct elements on the cultural landscape, are organized in space in discrete patterns, and serve as foci for other spatial relations.[2]

Purpose

The study serves four main purposes: (1) to cartographically depict and trace the changing pattern of towns in Montana between 1860 and 1920, (2) to analyze these patterns using relevant geographic and historic facts, theories, and techniques, (3) to seek a prevailing theme which influenced the development of the pattern, (4) to provide

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[1]The term Montana indicates the state as presently delimited.

[2]For the purpose of this study, a town was any agglomeration of 100 or more white inhabitants. During the study period, sources for town populations did not enumerate non-white population. The primary source for populations of small centers, the R. L. Polk and Company's Gazetteers, shows centers of approximately 100 or less to be place names, incorporating regional population about a single post office, store, or other service unit.

information for teachers and students of Montana geography and history.

The year 1860 was chosen as the beginning year because it is the decennial census year which immediately preceeds the initial influx of large numbers of white population. The year 1920 was selected as it is the decennial census year which marks the emergence of the basic elements of the state's present town pattern.

The Approach

The study is one in historical geography. This field "has come to be increasingly identified with an approach in which the data are historical but in which the method is geographic."[3] Numerous approaches characterize the field; Newcomb recognizes twelve.[4] A combination of two traditional approaches are used in this study--Historic Cross Sectional and Genetic.

Town Pattern Maps

Town pattern maps were drafted for each of the study years--1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, and 1920.[5] The cross sections were grouped into reconstructions corresponding to three main phases in the development of the pattern:

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[3]H. C. Darby, "On the Relation of Geography and History," Institute of British Geographers, Transactions and Papers, 1953, IXX (1954), 3.

[4]Robert Newcomb, "Twelve Working Approaches to Historical Geography," Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers, Thirty-first Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers, (Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1969), pp. 27-50.

[5]Hereafter referred to as map years.

1) Initiation and Early Growth, 1860 to 1880
2) Dispersion, 1880 to 1900
3) Accelerated Growth and Infilling, 1900 to 1920

Population figures for all towns through 1880 and all incorporated towns through 1920 were taken from decennial Census Bureau Reports. Populations for unincorporated towns in 1890, 1900, and 1910 were obtained from Volumes 7, 12, and 17, respectively, of the R. L. Polk and Company's Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory.[6] Populations for unincorporated towns in 1920 were taken from Volume 22 of the R. L. Polk and Company's Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory. Figures for unincorporated towns missing in the Polk Gazetteers were obtained from R. G. Dun and Company Reference Books. All population figures appear in the Appendix.

Postal Location Maps

Post office locations, obtained from official government publications, were mapped for the years 1865, 1867, 1870, 1875, 1880, 1885, 1890, 1900, and 1910. The potential value of historic post office locations was recognized by Cheney:

> Since origins imply dates, and the establishment of post offices is a firm date obtainable from official records, it is one of the most significant clues to when towns were started, when they were active, and when - and - if - they declined.[7]

By assuming a positive correlation between population and

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[6]An accuracy figure for these populations was obtained for each of the three years by comparing the total census population of all incorporated places of 1500 or less with Polk's total for the same towns. Figures obtained ranged from .94 for 1910 to 1.002 for 1890.

[7]Roberta Cheney, "Montana Place Names," Montana the Magazine of Western History, XX (Jan., 1970), 49.

post office densities, it is possible to delineate the approximate location of the frontier of settlement. Shifts in this frontier aid in understanding the diffusion of towns, particularly in the first thirty years of the study. The use of these historic post office locations may introduce a new tool to the historical geographer who has traditionally overworked census data to obtain information on population distribution.

Town Hierarchy Maps

Towns are functional entities. Most serve as central places providing goods and services to their population and to that of a theoretically hexagonal shaped tributary or complementary areas.[8] Each good has a tributary area delimited by the range of that good, or the maximum distance people will travel to obtain it.

Centrality of a town is a measure of the degree to which it serves as a central place. Lower order centers offer only limited goods to relatively small tributary areas.[9] Such small centers are closely spaced, as their goods generally have a low threshold population, require frequent purchase, and are transport sensitive. Higher order places provide the same goods as lower order centers, plus additional, and more specialized goods to a larger tributary area.[10] These more widely spaced central places generally have

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[8]Hereafter, both goods and services are referred to collectively as goods.

[9]Perhaps only those of a general store and post office.

[10]These might include a men's clothing store, doctor, lawyer, and newspaper.

greater population both within the center and the tributary area.[11]

Central places fit into a hierarchy of discrete classes. Various names have been applied to these classes; Hamlet, Village, Town, and City are the most common.[12] The incompleteness of goods available in lower order centers makes periodic travel to higher order centers necessary. The new goods available in these higher order centers have greater ranges; they attract people from larger distances. A result is a "nesting" pattern of lower order trade areas within the tributary area of higher order centers.

A statistical study by Berry and Garrison suggests that the grouping of centers into hierarchical classes is intrinsic in urban systems.[13] Such a use of central place theory and statistical analysis in an attempt to find an inherent hierarchy is beyond the scope of this study.

For this study, hierarchical classes were determined as diagrammed in Figure 1. Class limits, based on the number of establishments in centers, were chosen for 1880 and 1920 to produce a large

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[11]Walter Christaller, Central Places in Southern Germany trans. by Carlisle Baskin (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966), pp. 1-27, passim. and Brian J. L. Berry and Allen Pred, Central Place Studies; A Bibliography of Theory and Applications (Philadelphia: Regional Science Research Institute, 1961), pp. 3-4.

[12]Note the capitalization of the word "Town," used to designate an hierarchical level. This should not be confused with "town," any cluster of 100 or more white inhabitants.

[13]Brian J. L. Berry and William Garrison, "The Functional Bases of the Central Place Hierarchy," Economic Geography, XXXIV (April, 1958), 145-154.

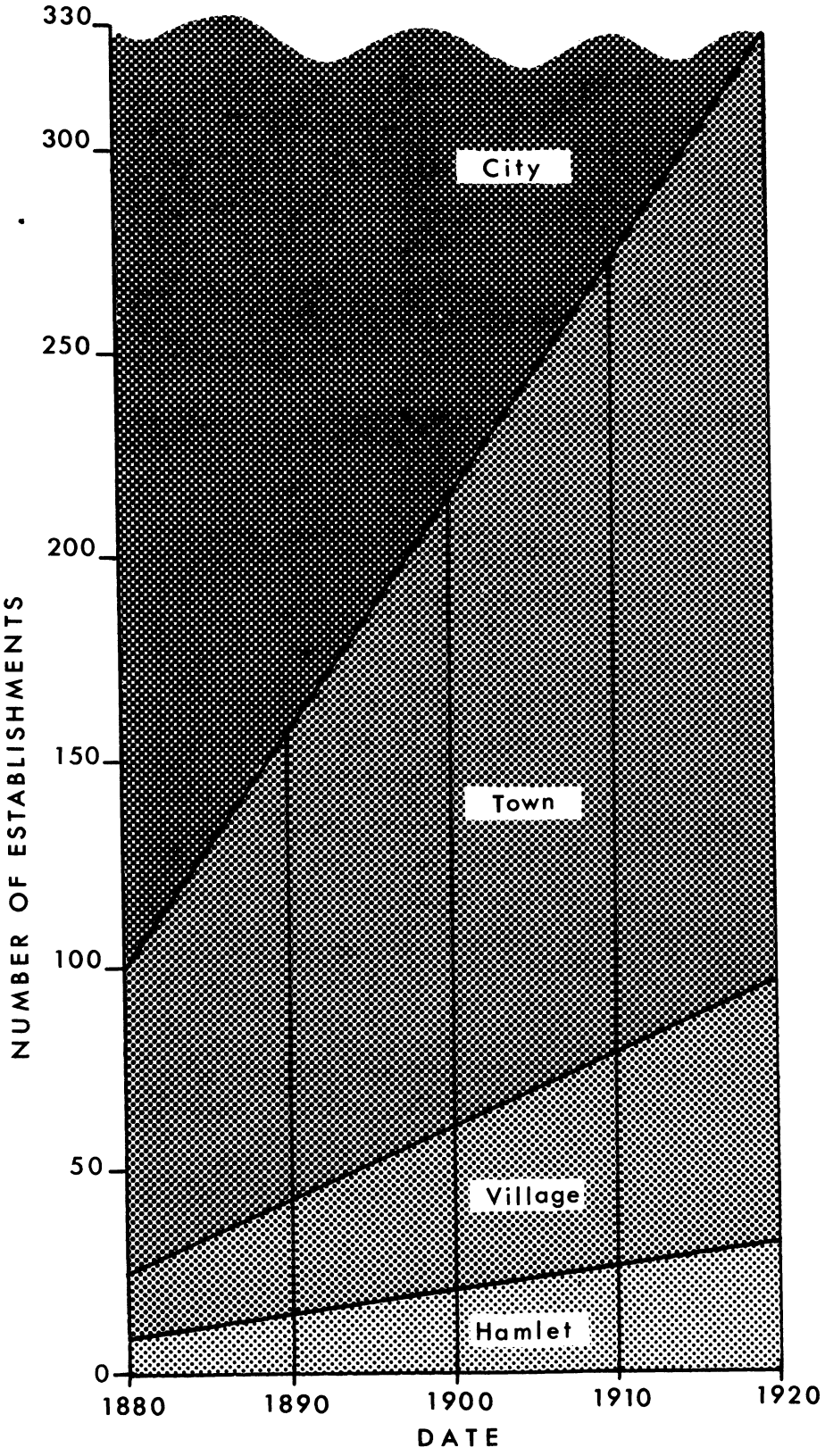

Fig. 1--Hierarchy classification chart.

number of Hamlets and progressively fewer higher order centers.[14] The upper limits for each class (for 1880 and 1920) were then connected by straight lines to produce class intervals for 1890, 1900, and 1910.

Basic to this classification scheme is the assumption that town classes within an urban network change through time. During the earliest stages of development, relatively few establishments are present in even the highest order centers. With time, the network develops as previously existing and new centers add businesses. As the number of establishments in the system increases, the number in any given class also increases, thereby keeping the same relative relationship with other classes.

The Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five major parts. In this, the first part, the problem is introduced and the rationale of the study is discussed. Parts two, three, and four consider Montana's development and the resulting town pattern changes during each of the three reconstructive periods:

1) Initiation and Early Growth, 1860 to 1880
2) Dispersion, 1880 to 1900
3) Accelerated Growth and Infilling, 1900 to 1920

The fifth and final part contains conclusions.

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[14]The number of establishments in each town was obtained from the 1880 R. G. Dun and Company Reference Book, the 1890, 1900, and 1910 R. L. Polk and Company's Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory, and the 1921 R. L. Polk and Company's Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory.

CHAPTER II

INITIATION AND EARLY GROWTH, 1860 TO 1880

Fur Trappers and Missionaries

White habitation and exploitation in Montana did not start with the gold rushes of the early 1860's. Fur trappers came first. The French, British, and American trading companies converged on Montana shortly after Lewis and Clark's epic 1804-06 journey. Between 1807, the year of establishment of the first fur post, and 1860, seven companies built more than twenty-five posts.[1]

Fur trapping directly influenced subsequent development. Trapping required familiarity with the area and necessitated exploration and mapping. Knowledge of the region gained by these early trappers aided the ensuing wave of miners. Trappers also created hostility among some natives by decimating their once abundant game animals. With the exception of Fort Benton, their fur forts disappeared with the decline of fur trapping in the 1840's and 1850's.

Missionary activity, appearing in western Montana in the 1840's, also preceeded the gold mining era. St. Mary's Mission, located in the Bitterroot Valley, was founded by Father Pierre-Jean de Smet in 1841 (Figs. 2 and 3). It continued to function as a mission

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[1]Paul C. Phillips, "The Fur Trade in Montana," in A History of Montana, ed. by Merrill G. Burlingame and K. Ross Toole (3 vols.; New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1957), I, pp. 95-96.

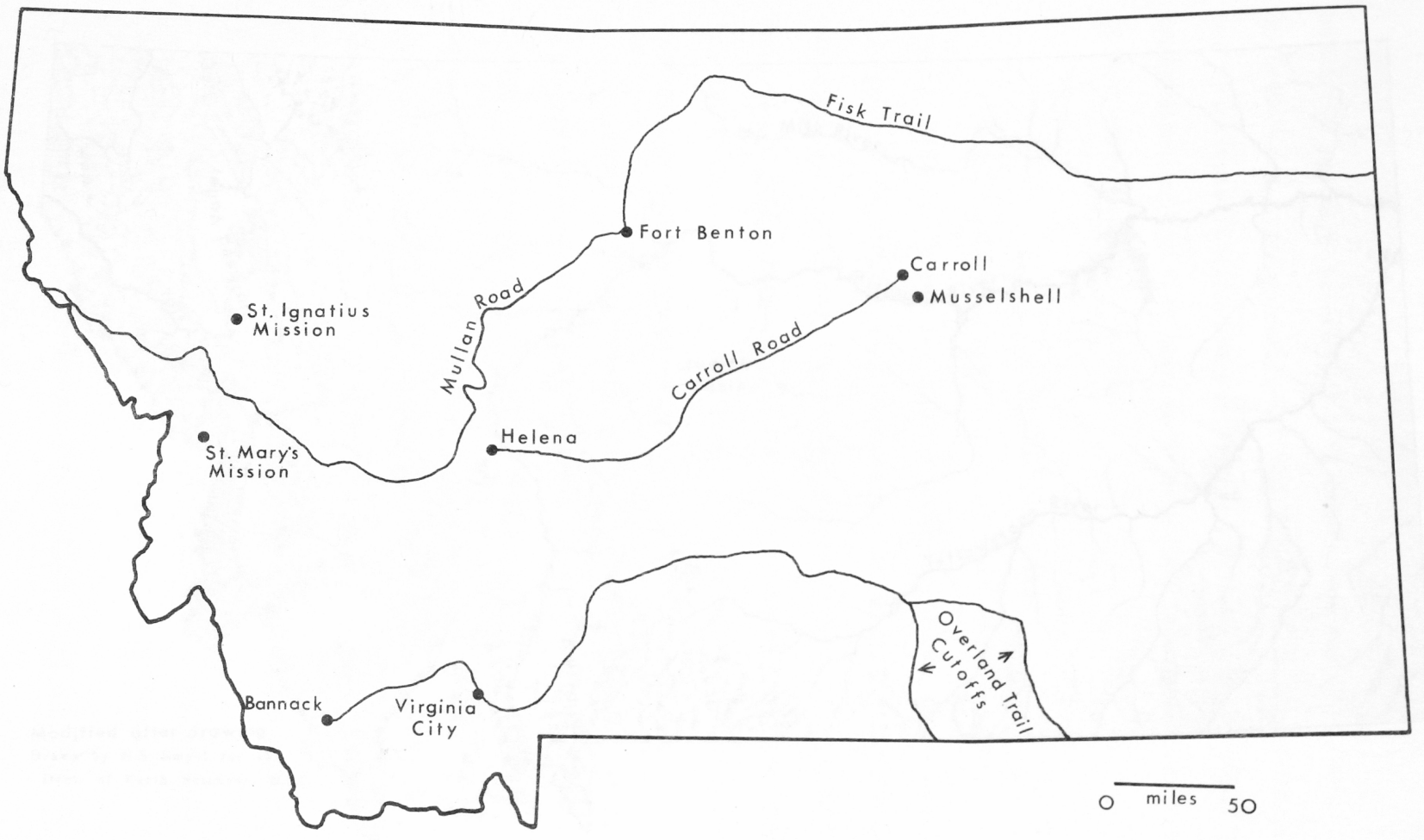

Fig. 2--Map of selected missions, roads, and towns.

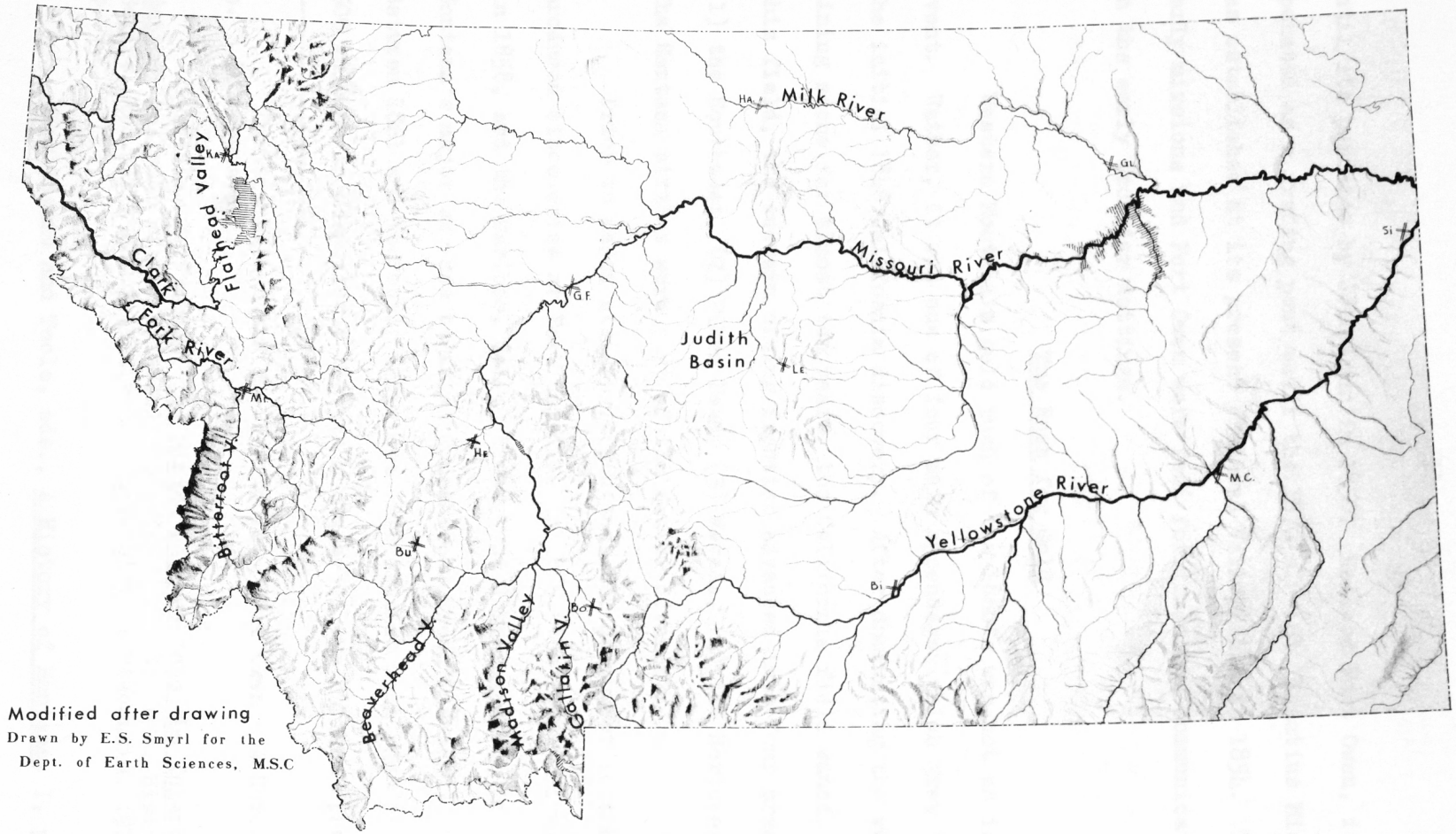

Fig. 3--Physiographic map.

Source: Nicholas Helburn, Milton J. Edie, and Gordon W. Lightfoot, Montana in Maps (Bozeman: Artcraft Printers, 1962), p. 5.

until its purchase by John Owen in 1850. Renamed Fort Owen, it was operated as a trading post until the 1870's.[2] St. Ignatius Mission was established at its present Flathead Valley site in 1854. The early missions and Fort Owen were foci for trade and communication in the early frontier settings.

The Rush for Gold

Western Montana's gold rush of the 1860's was not an isolated event. Rather, it was one of four main appendages which grew from the initial 1848 California discovery. After dominating the western mining scene for almost ten years, the California field waned. From this field, the western mining frontier advanced into four areas: (1) the Southwest, (2) Pikes Peak, (3) Nevada, (4) the Northwest. The Montana strikes were part of the latter advance.[3]

Prior to major strikes in Montana, the Northwest advance produced discoveries at Fort Colville in 1855, the Fraser River region in 1858, and the Cariboo, Salmon River, and John Day areas in 1861. Montana's major strikes began at Grasshopper Creek (Bannack) in 1862. Between 1861 and the early seventies, discoveries were made in nearly 500 gulches in mountainous western Montana.[4] Some strikes spawned

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[2]Carling Malouf and K. Ross Toole, "Fort Owen - A Chronology" p. 3 (Mimeographed.)

[3]William J. Trimble, The Mining Advance into the Inland Empire, Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, No. 638, History Series, Vol. III, No. 2 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1914), p. 7.

[4]Burlingame and Toole, eds., A History of Montana, I, p. 127.

permanent settlements, some, short-lived towns, and others, temporary encampments.

Population of gold mining centers increased as miners arrived in the western valleys via the Fisk Trail, Mullan Wagon Road, Missouri River, and Overland Trail cutoffs. In 1899, the Society of Montana Pioneers issued a register listing 1,808 settlers who arrived in Montana prior to 1865. Of this total, 1,474 indicated their route to Montana. Sixty-one entered from Canada or the Dakotas (Fisk Trail), 111 traveled east from the Pacific (Mullan Wagon Road), and 1,302 reached Montana via the Missouri River or the Overland Trail.[5]

An example of the rapid growth of the mining centers was recorded in the diary of an early Virginia City miner.

> It surprises me to see how rapidly this country improves. First two miles below here is Virginia City, a thriving village with many business houses; then one mile farther down is Central City, not Quite so large; then in another mile you enter Nevada, as large as Virginia City; then about a mile and a half furthur brings you to Junction City. The road connecting these "cities" is bordered with dwellings on both sides all along. I shouldn't have the patience to count the business places, but can say that the market is so well stocked that all necessaries and many luxuries can be obtained in the stores. Recalling that only eighteen months ago this was a "howling wilderness," or rather a howling desert. . . .[6]

Almost 100 buildings were being erected weekly in Virginia City and environs by mid 1864.[7] The population reached more than 10,000 in

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[5]James U. Sanders, ed., Register, Society of Montana Pioneers (Akron: The Werner Company, 1899), I, pp. 45-247, passim.

[6]J. H. Morley, excerpt from diary for Nov. 12, 1864; MS at Montana Historical Society, Helena.

[7]Montana Post, Aug. 27, 1864, p. 3.

less than a year (Figs. 4 and 5).[8]

The size and importance of early mining towns was deceptive.

> The population of these towns, in numbers varying from a few score to perhaps ten thousand as the extreme limit in flush times, appears in comparison with that of eastern towns, of little importance. But, anyone familiar with the frontier conditions knows that such outposts of civilization are of many fold more consequence than villages of like size in the East. . . . frontier towns were ganglia of civilization. . . .[9]

Early mining towns were indeed ganglia for the evolving frontier regions. Miners required goods and services. They had gold, but lacked necessary manufactured goods. With only limited local sources for these goods, almost all had to be imported. The tertiary sector developed to meet the demand. As indicated by the early Virginia City miner, business establishments flourished by providing services and imported manufactured and processed goods for gold. An early network of wagon and haul roads developed to meet transportation needs. The importance of transportation links in the new territory is suggested by the large number of territorial acts incorporating wagon roads, toll roads, ferrys, and bridge companies.[10]

Early Farmer and Rancher

The farmer and rancher preceded the gold miner in Montana. Early agricultural centers developed in valleys adjacent to the western

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[8]N. C. Abbott, Montana in the Making (Billings: Gazette Printing Company, 1931), p. 146.

[9]Trimble, The Mining Advance, pp. 111-112.

[10]Montana, Acts, Resolutions and Memorials of the Territory of Montana (1864), pp. 536-716, passim.

Fig. 4--Virginia City, Montana, 1866. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

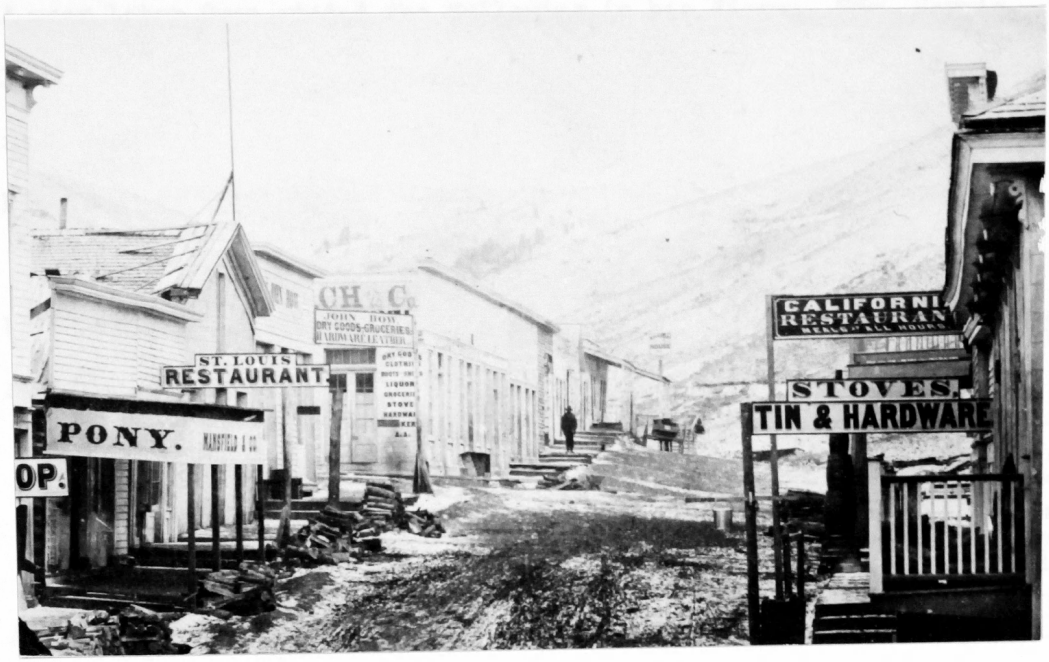

Fig. 5--Jackson Street looking south, Virginia City, Montana, 1860's. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

missions. This agricultural base provided food for the miners, and, when expanded, resulted in the initial agricultural occupation of the plains.

In 1860, 259 inhabitants resided in the Bitterroot Valley's 55 dwellings.[11] Seventy-nine of these lived on 17 farms. John Owen's fort was one agricultural operation. The July 23, 1862 entry in Owen's diary recorded: "Gold Gold Nothing is talked of but Gold. When will it End [sic]. The prospect of the farmer is flattering."[12]

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[11]Author unknown, compiled from Eighth Census, 1860, Washington Territory, free inhabitants, Enis Book, schedule 1, Free Inhabitants in the Bitterroot Valley in the County of Spokane, Territory of Washington, Sept. 14, 1860 (Mimeographed.)

[12]John Owen, The Journals and Letters of Major John Owen, transcribed and edited from the original manuscripts in the Montana Historical Society and the collection of W. R. Coe, Esq. by Seymour Dunbar (2 vols; Portland, Maine: Southworth Press, 1927), I, p. 258.

A year later Owen stated the following in his diary: "Mr. Harris left this morning for the Stinking Water Mine [Virginia City, Montana area] with two wagons loaded with vegetables and some ten or more head of Beef Cattle."[13]

The western farming and ranching populations were increased by the addition of miners. An 1864 issue of the Montana Post encouraged miners to become farmers:

> Let a portion of our citizens turn their attention to farming and stock raising, they will make money, and the people will receive provision much lower . . . directing the attention of some among the many enterprising men in this newly developing country into an excellent channel for its remunerative exercise. . . ."[14]

A month later, the same paper reported that the Gallatin Valley was being rapidly filled by farmers.[15]

Both the Gallatin and Bitterroot Valleys became granaries for the new Montana Territory, established in 1864. By 1868, each valley boasted three of the territory's eleven flour mills.[16] The Gallatin Valley took the lead as wheat production increased from 20,000 bushels in 1865 to 300,000 in 1867 and retained its lead until the agricultural settlement of the plains.[17]

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[13]John Owen, The Journals, p. 292.

[14]Montana Post, August 27, 1864, p. 3.

[15]Montana Post, Sept. 17, 1864, p. 1.

[16]Helena Weekly Herald, Feb. 20, 1868, p. 8.

[17]Merrill G. Burlingame, The Montana Frontier (Helena: State Publishing Company, 1942), p. 343.

In 1865, the entire Montana Territory had only 1,796 sheep and 1,896 cattle.[18] By the 1870's, these totals were dwarfed by the number of sheep and cattle in single counties (Table 1). Livestock

TABLE 1

CATTLE AND SHEEP PER COUNTY, 1873 AND 1879

County[a]	Cattle		Sheep	
	1873	1879	1873	1879
Beaverhead	7,858	26,915	6,262	8,606
Choteau	3,721	35,204	. .	14,450
Custer	. .	. .	. .	. .
Deer Lodge	17,467	28,429	414	31,466
Gallatin	11,830	35,029	. .	9,698
Jefferson	11,284	19,577	2,450	14,394
Lewis and Clark	9,591	30,212	917	18,214
Madison	11,288	34,478	8	10,567
Meagher	8,570	38,734	. .	59,391
Missoula	5,335	15,210	546	2,105
Total	86,944	263,788	10,597	168,891

[a]Refer to Figure 6 for county locations.

Sources: W. H. Rodgers, Report of the Auditor and Treasurer of Montana Territory, 1873 (Virginia City: Madisonian Print, 1874), p. 10.
J. P. Woolman, Annual Report of the Auditor and Treasurer of the Territory of Montana, 1879 (Helena: Independent Steam Power Print, 1880), pp. 6 and 10.

became so numerous and land so valuable for agriculture, that livestock ranching spread east of the mountains. By the early 1870's, large numbers of cattle and sheep grazed the Judith Basin and adjacent areas. The livestock industry continued to push eastward as

[18]Montana, Report of the Auditor, Treasurer and Indian Commissioner of the Territory of Montana, 1865-66 (Virginia City: Democrat Print, n.d.), p. 2.

Indians were moved from traditional lands and confined to reservations north of the Missouri and south of the Yellowstone Rivers. As a result, vast grazing lands of central Montana were opened to white settlement (Fig. 6).

Fort Benton--An Early Transportation Center

Fort Benton, situated at the head of steamship navigation on the Missouri River, was Montana's first transportation and distribution center. In addition to a river location, its site was enhanced by a location at the terminus of the Fisk Trail and the Mullan Wagon Road.

The Fisk Trail extended west from Fargo, Dakota, through Fort Union, and west across northern Montana to Fort Benton. It was the most direct route for prospective miners and settlers from Minnesota and other northern states. The Mullan Wagon Road, connecting Walla Walla, Washington, and Fort Benton, was usable by 1860.[19] Stretching for more than 600 miles, the road provided a direct transportation link between the Columbia and Missouri River systems. Although military considerations were important to its construction, the steamship-wagon road route was also seen "as the *sine qua non* to the full and speedy settlement of the country between them, as well as the all-important aids in the construction of a Pacific Railroad *via* a

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[19]For an excellent discussion of the Mullan Wagon Road see: Alton Byron Oviatt, "The Movement for a Northern Trail; the Mullan Wagon Road, 1859-1869" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1947).

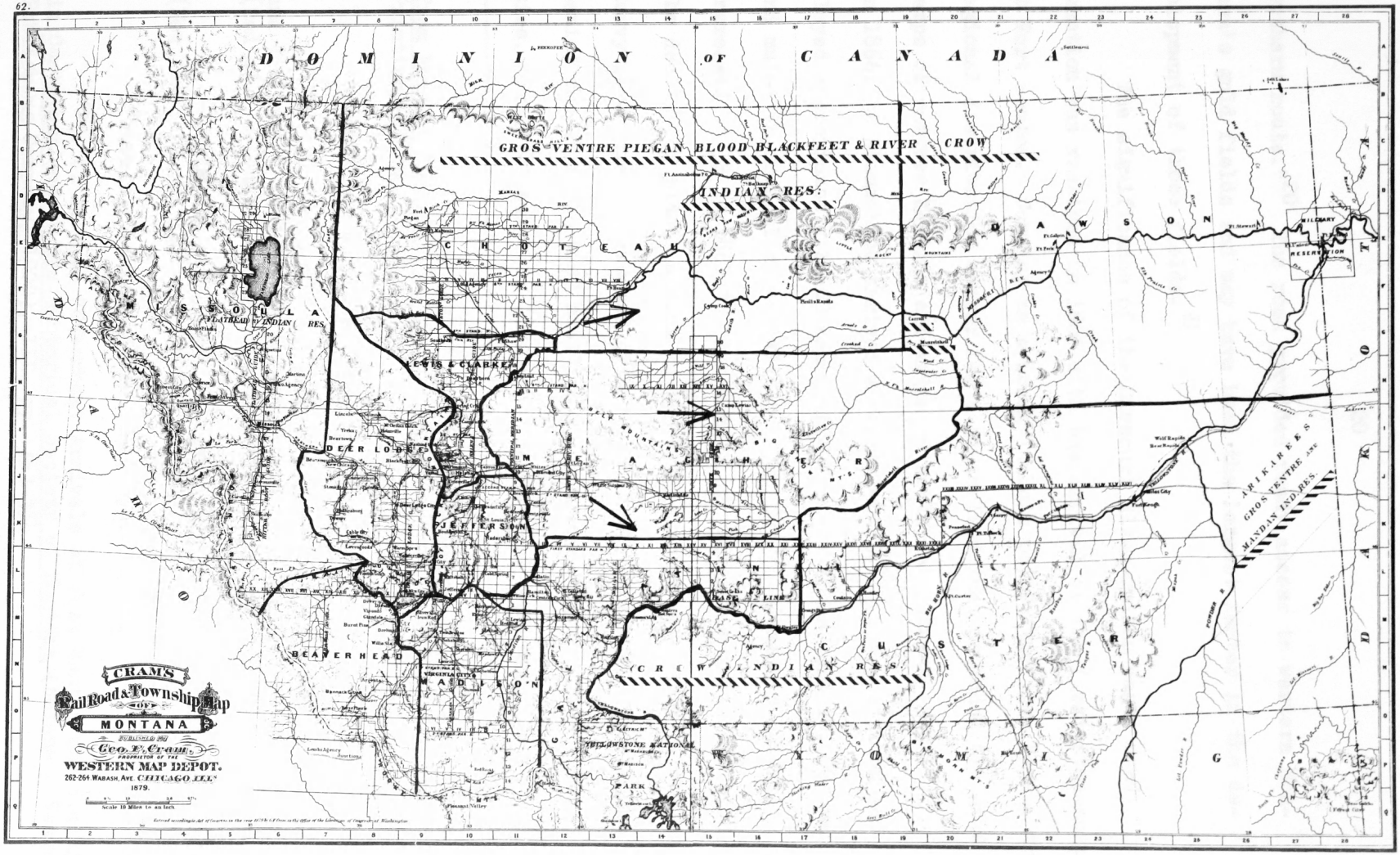

Fig. 6--Cram's Railroad and Township Map of Montana

northern route."[20] The road provided ready access to western Montana's gold fields and may have been the largest factor in the development of those fields.[21]

The significance of the Missouri River-Mullan Wagon Road junction was realized in 1860 with the arrival of the first steamship at Fort Benton. Serving as a break-in-bulk point, the town became the regional distribution center for a hinterland that included the gold camps of western Montana and extended north into Canada (Fig. 7). In 1866, 31 steamships arrived at Fort Benton.[22] The port then employed approximately 2,500 men, 3,000 freight teams, and 20,000 oxen and mules in freighting activities (Fig. 8).[23] Steamship landings increased to 39 in 1867.[24] The number of yearly arrivals fell with the decline of placer mining in the late sixties and early seventies. Heavy river traffic resumed with the economic expansion that accompanied the shift to hard rock mining in the middle and late seventies. Traffic peaked in 1878 when 46 steamships reached the fort.[25]

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[20]John Mullan, Report on the Construction of a Military Road from Fort Walla-Walla to Fort Benton (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), p. 3.

[21]Burlingame, The Montana Frontier, p. 131.

[22][T. C. Powers], "Steamboat Arrivals at Fort Benton, Montana and Vicinity," in Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana (2nd ed.; Helena: Independent Publishing Company, 1902), I, pp. 281-282.

[23]Daniel Sylvester Tuttle, Reminiscences of a missionary bishop (New York: T. Whittaker, [1906]), p. 200.

[24]Powers, "Steamboat Arrivals," pp. 282-284.

[25]T. C. Powers, "Steamboat Arrivals at Fort Benton and Vicinity," in Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana (Helena: State Publishing Company, 1900), III, pp. 353-354.

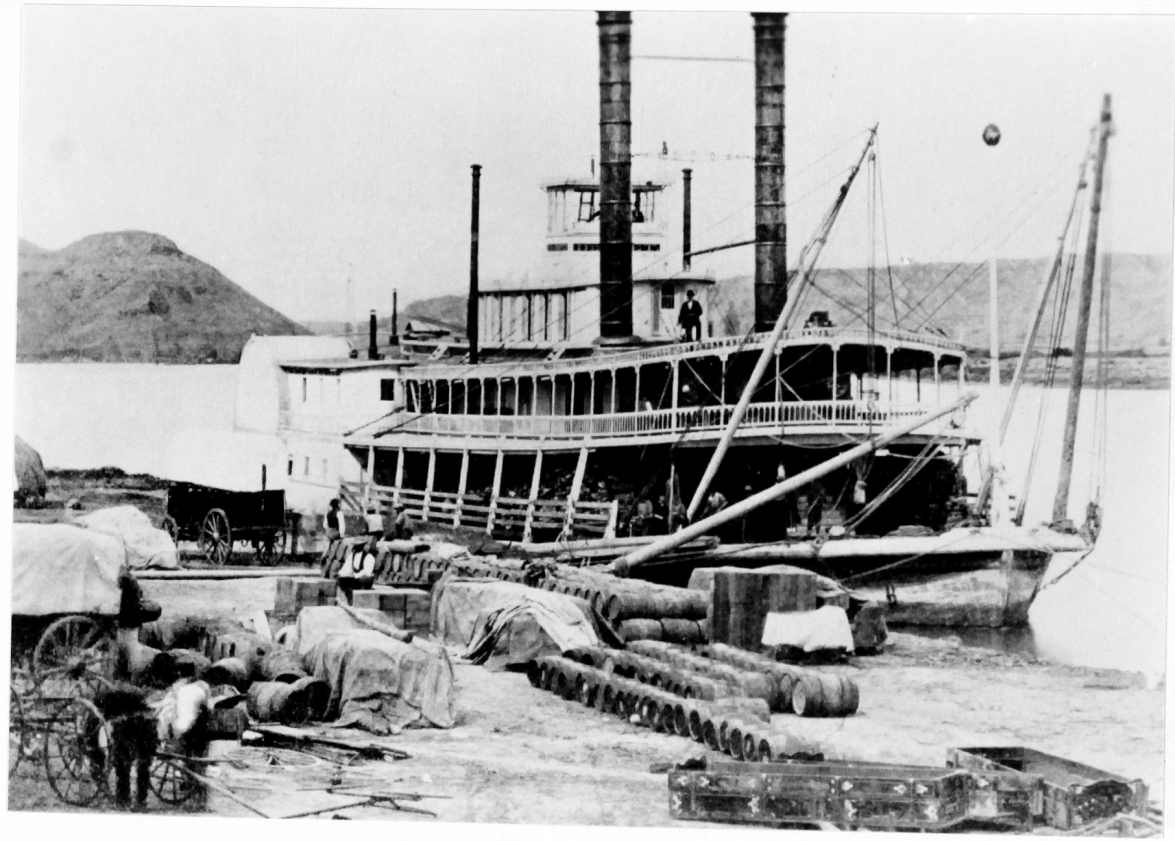

Fig. 7--Steamship "De Smet" unloading cargo at the Fort Benton levee, 1870's. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

Fig. 8--Early Montana freight team. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

The next year, arrivals fell to 7 as the northward-building Utah and Northern Railroad attracted a large part of western Montana's freight.[26]

Fort Benton's river trade monopoly was challenged by at least two towns. The first was Musselshell, located on the Missouri River 175 miles downstream from the head of navigation. In the late sixties, a townsite was surveyed; a gunshop, two trading establishments, two saloons, and about a dozen cabins were built. The town was unable to attract Fort Benton's entrenched trade, and the buildings soon fell to ruin.[27]

In the mid-seventies, the Diamond R Transportation Company founded Carroll, twenty miles upstream from the declining settlement of Mussellshell. The Carroll Road was built west from Carroll to Camp Lewis, across the Judith Basin, through Martinsdale and Diamond City, and into Helena. More successful than Mussellshell, it succeeded in attracting a small portion of Fort Benton's trade.[28]

Hard Rock Mining--An Expanded Economic Base

By 1866 placer mining was declining. Most of the easily worked deposits had been depleted. As a result, miners moved on and centers which once boasted populations in the thousands were left as ghost towns. Hard rock mining gradually began to take hold. The

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[26]Ibid., p. 354.

[27]Peter Koch, "Life at Musselshell in 1869 and 1870," in Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana (Helena: State Publishing Company, 1896), II, pp. 292-303.

[28]Dillon Examiner, March 16, 1921, page unknown.

transition from placer to hard rock mining was not universal or always immediate. Some towns almost disappeared before the traditional sluice box of the placer miner yielded to the more sophisticated stamp mills, smelters, and other heavy equipment necessary to crush and treat the mineral-bearing rock.

The change to hard rock mining and the recovery of silver and copper resulted in major changes in the territory. Wandering individuals and loose small groups of the placer mining phase were replaced by greater population permanence and corporate structure. The new mining methods required significant capital expenditures, much of which came from the East. As early as 1865, some farsighted individuals realized the necessity of outside capital and boasted, "We have genuine lodes of both gold and silver in quantities sufficient to employ the surplus capital of all eastern cities. . . ."[29]

Helena made a successful transition from placer mining camp to hard rock mining town and developed as a transshipment point and regional trade center for much of the western portion of Montana. Attracting the corporate concerns that appeared in conjunction with the new mining activity, the town became the territory's financial center.

Butte made a shaky transition from placer camp to hard rock mining center. With the 1864 gold strike, Butte experienced an influx of miners. By 1869, the placer deposits had been worked out and the

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[29]Montana Post, May 13, 1865, p. 2.

population dropped to less than sixty.[30] The town revived with the development of hard rock mining and by 1875, its mines were yielding silver and copper. In 1876, Butte mines had the capacity to produce 100 tons of copper daily, although inadequate transportation facilities kept the town from reaching its capacity.[31]

Insufficient transportation facilities hampered early development of silver and copper mining in all of western Montana. Improved transportation was needed to move the heavy refining equipment in and the tons of metal out. In 1876, refined copper shipped from Butte to Salt Lake City was worth $40 per ton. With a Helena-to-Fort Benton railroad and a direct wagon road link between Butte and Helena, the metal could be shipped to Baltimore and the nation's industrial core where it could sell at the same Salt Lake City price.[32] Butte's potential as a copper mining center was not fully developed until after the arrival of the Utah and Northern Railroad in the early eighties.

Hard rock mining expanded the economic base. Lumbering accelerated to meet the needs of mining and refining companies. Mine shafts had to be shorn, steam-operated hoists and pumps fueled, ores roasted, and structures built. Farmers and ranchers profited from the more stable markets for their products.

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[30]K. Ross Toole, Montana: An Uncommon Land (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1959), p. 82.

[31]Helena Daily Herald, Oct. 2, 1876, p. 1.

[32]Ibid.

The Patterns, 1860 to 1880

Post Offices and Towns, 1860 to 1870

Only Fort Benton appears on the 1860 town map (Fig. 9). Having as attributes both favorable site and situation, the fort was the entrepôt for the territory.

Gold mining towns and scattered agricultural and trade centers appeared during the sixties. The 1865 postal map shows post office locations in three early mining towns (Fig. 10). Within two years, there was an increase in both the territory's population and its areal distribution (Fig. 11). Linear orientation of postal locations indicates a diffusion of settlement along major western valleys where gold bearing placer deposits and fertile soils favored settlement.

The 1870 postal map reveals both an infilling and expansion of settlement throughout southwestern Montana (Fig. 12). The grouping of post offices and towns at that time delimited the Historic Core of settlement in Montana (Fig. 13).

Helena, boasting more than 3,000 of the territory's 20,595 inhabitants, was the largest town. Like Butte, Virginia City, Bannack, Diamond City, and many of the towns, Helena was founded on gold placer mining. Situated in the eastern portion of the Historic Core and still only 130 miles from the port of Fort Benton, it was the transshipment point and regional trade center for the Core.

Cedar Creek's anomalous population in 1870 illustrates the "boom-bust" aspect of most of the earlier placer mining communities. Gold was discovered there in 1869 and the mining center had a population of 1,486 within a year. A few years later, the deposits had

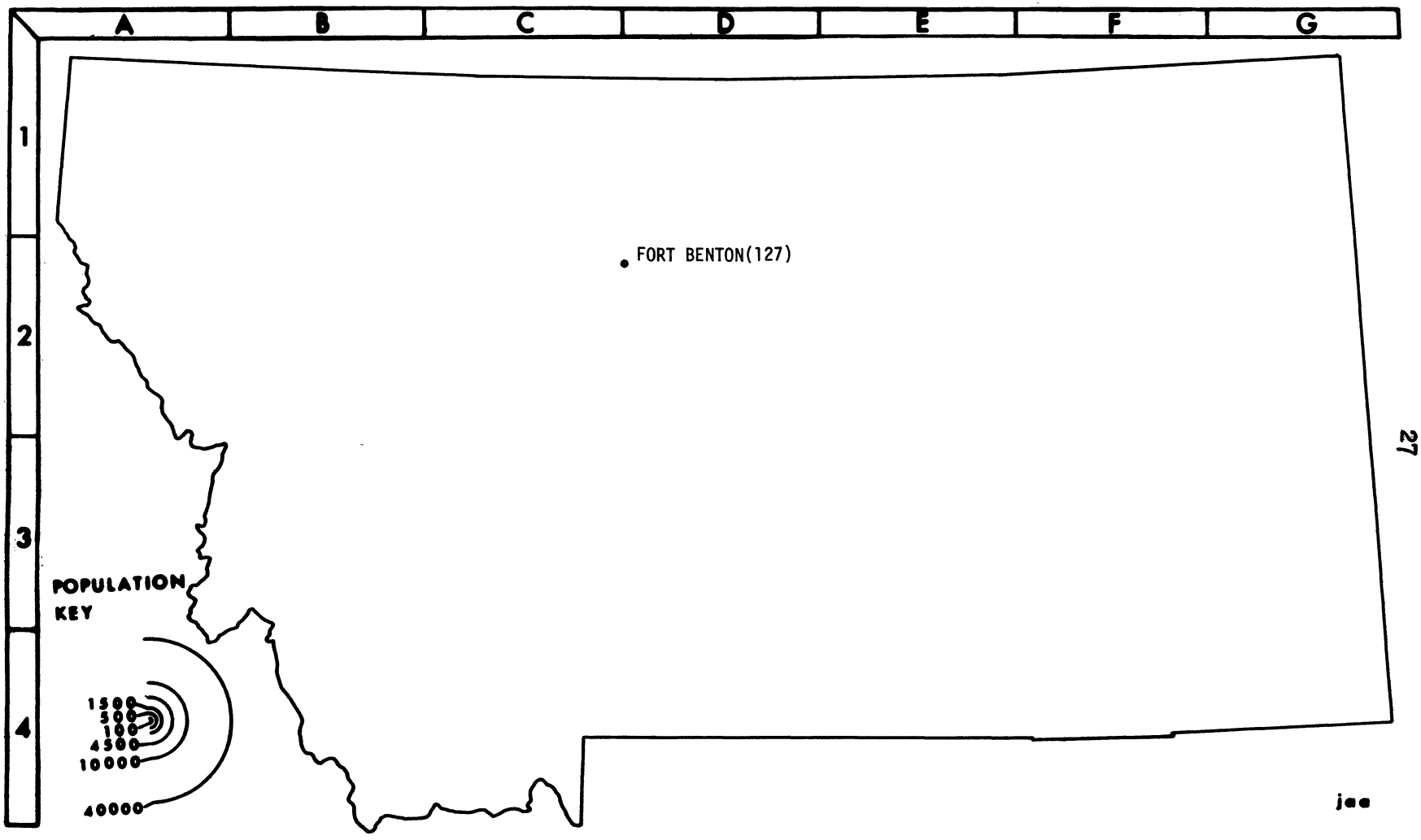

Fig. 9--Town map, 1860.

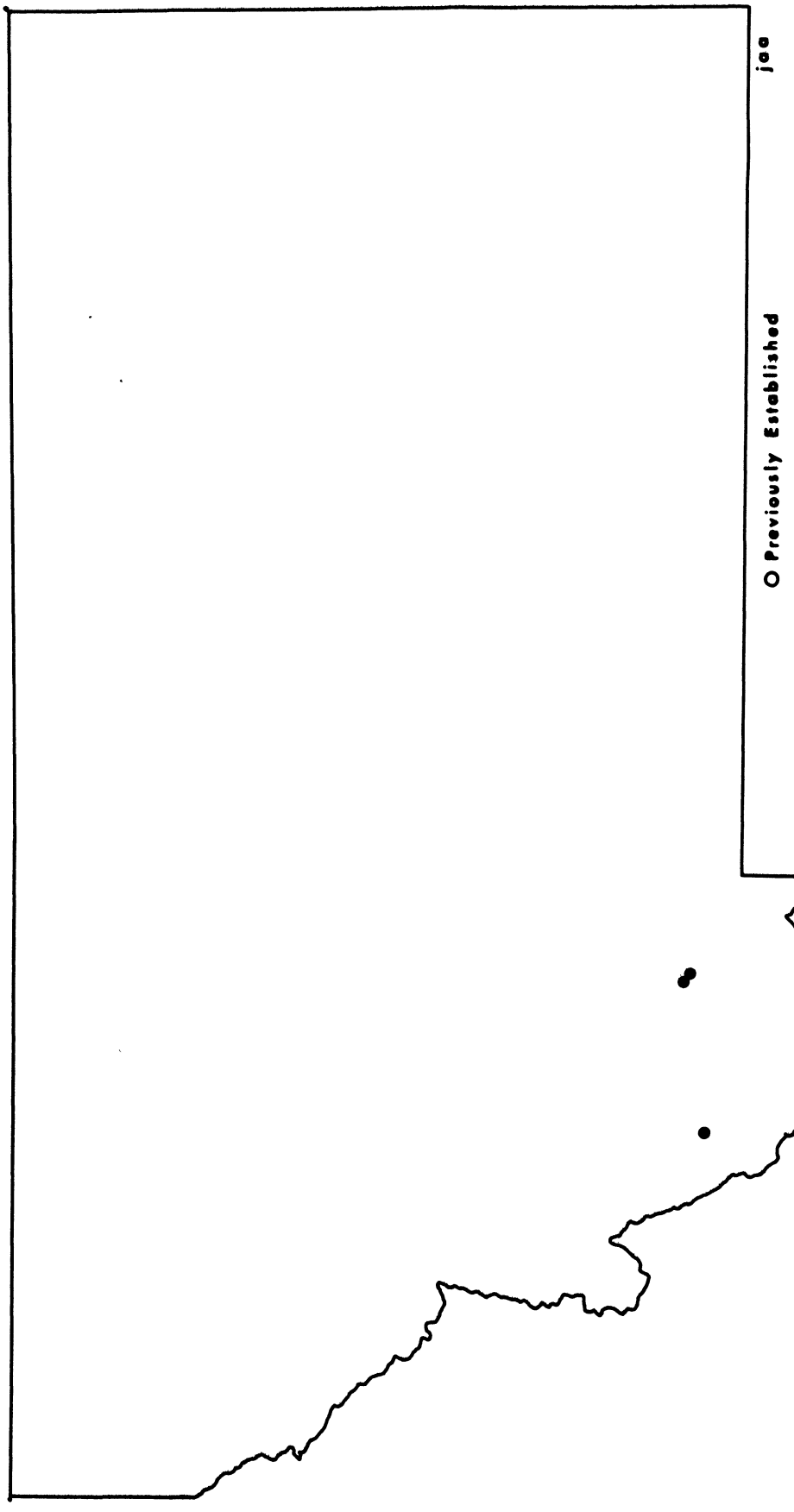

Fig. 10--Postal map, 1865.

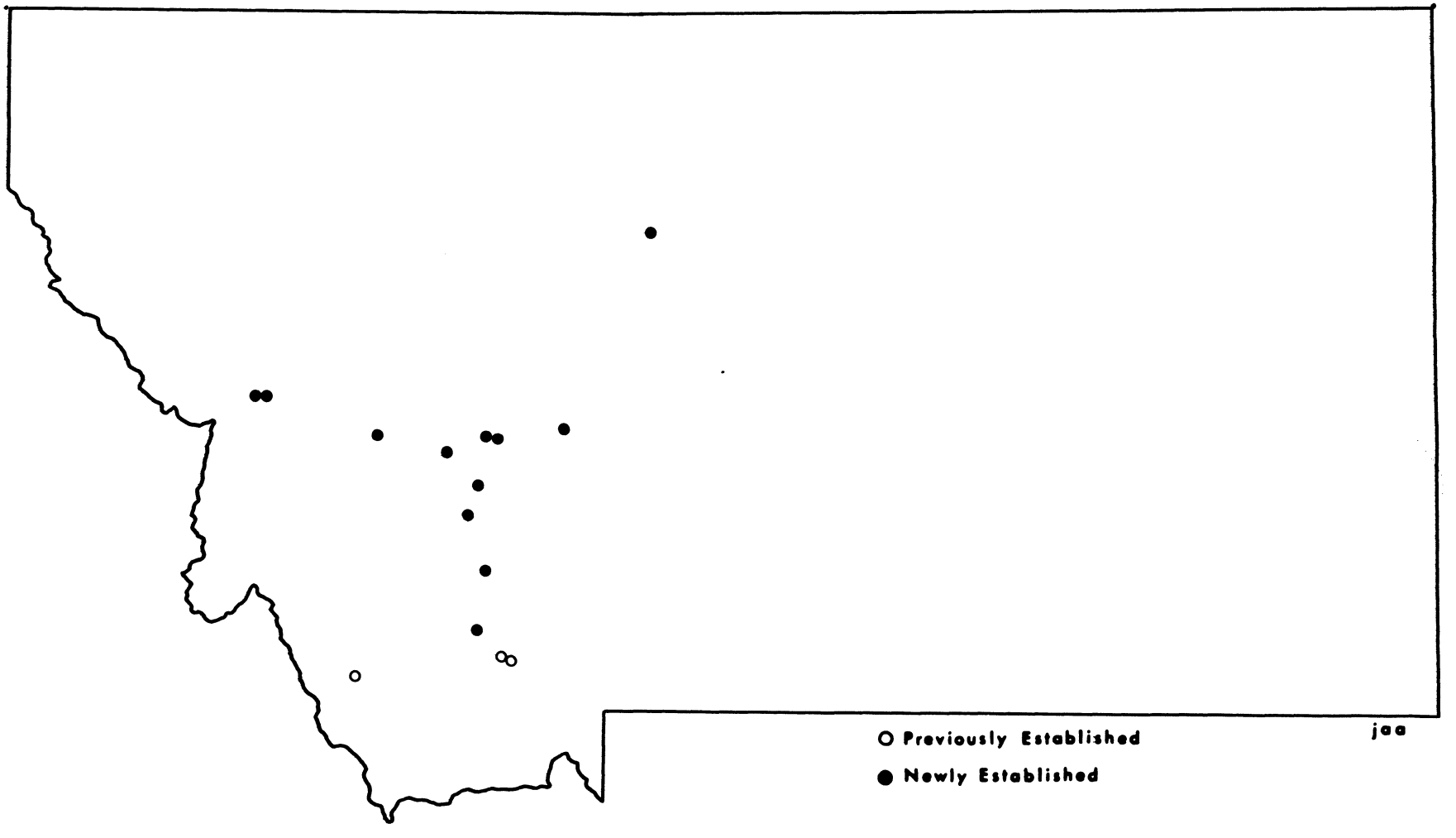

Fig. 11--Postal map, 1867.

Fig. 18--Bull train, corner of Main and Park Streets, Miles City, Montana, 1881. (L. A. Huffman photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

other railroads and branch lines appeared.

Railroads helped create towns where none previously existed (Figs. 22 and 23). These centers were a stimulus to local development and functioned as foci for their developing hinterlands. Selected centers also served as railroad division points, repair stations, and yards.

Billings, named after an N. P. president, is an example of a railroad-spawned town. The first building erected in Billings was a railroad cook shanty built in August of 1881. Townsite lots were

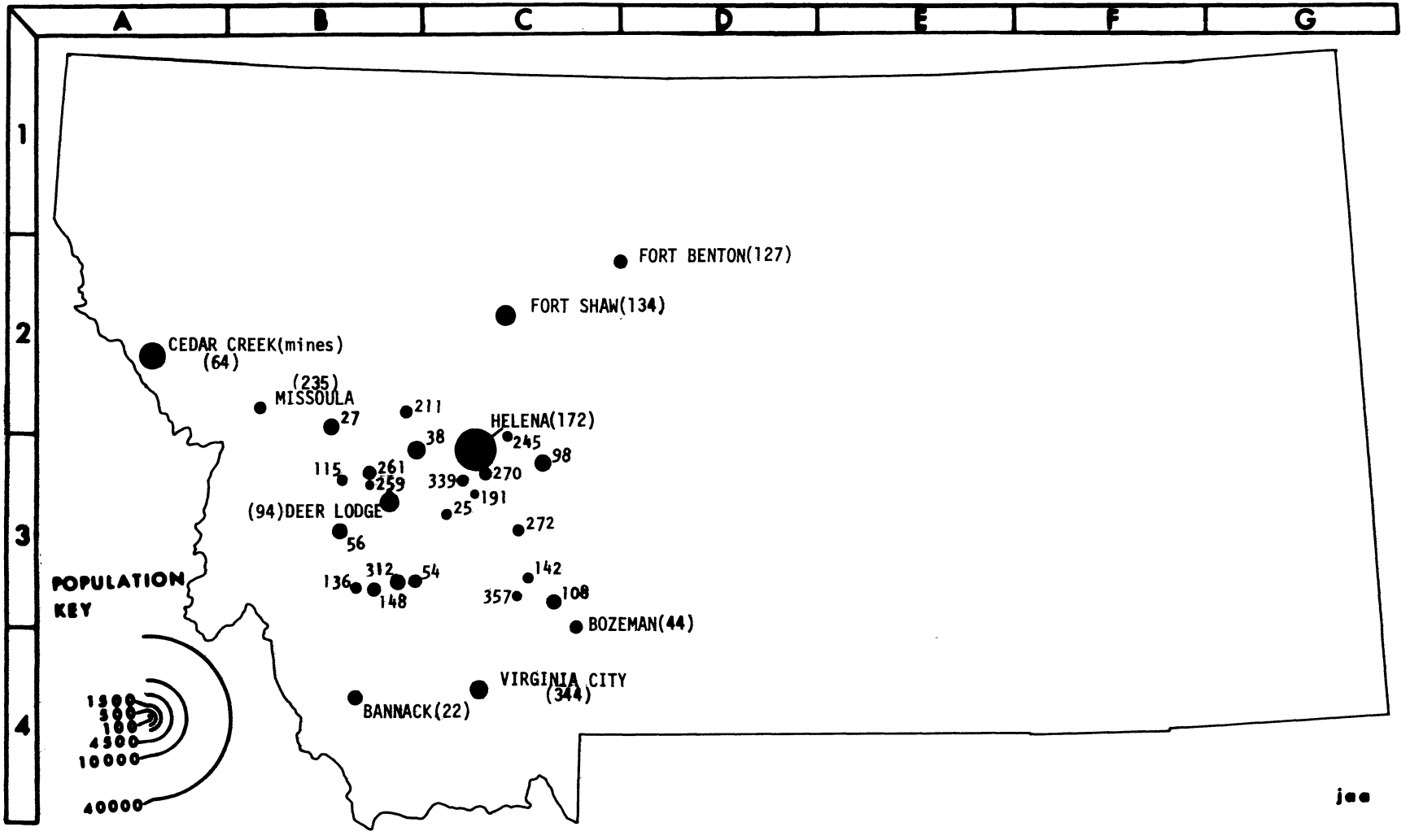

Fig. 13--Town map, 1870.

been worked out and population had moved on. By 1870, the same "boom-bust" transition had already occurred in major mining towns like Bannack, Virginia City, and Diamond City.

Centers such as Missoula, Bozeman, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, and East Gallatin were agricultural and trade centers. Fertile valley soils, plentiful water, ease of transportation, and more permanent markets in the mining centers helped assure the growth of such towns. Centers that grew on the basis of agriculture and trade generally had the best chance of surviving the decline of placer mining.

Fort Shaw, one of the first military posts in the territory, was built in 1867. The fort was originally built to protect traffic on the Mullan Road, but, like subsequent military posts, it also secured a broad area for white settlement.

Post Offices and Towns, 1870 to 1880

The Historic Core was more densely settled by 1875 (Fig. 14). With the exception of one post office at Carroll in east-central Montana, postal additions were within the Core area.

Figure 15 shows both further intensification within the Core and diffusion from the Core. A distinct eastward projecting appendage and a more diffuse northern extension can be noted. The eastward extending arm of settlement followed the Yellowstone River Valley. Fertile bottomlands, abundant water, and anticipated rail service were sufficient to lure agriculturalists as far east as the Coulson area, and to entice cattlemen to Miles City and beyond. The northward expansion of settlement was linked to livestock and agricultural activity, Indian trading centers, and the military installation at

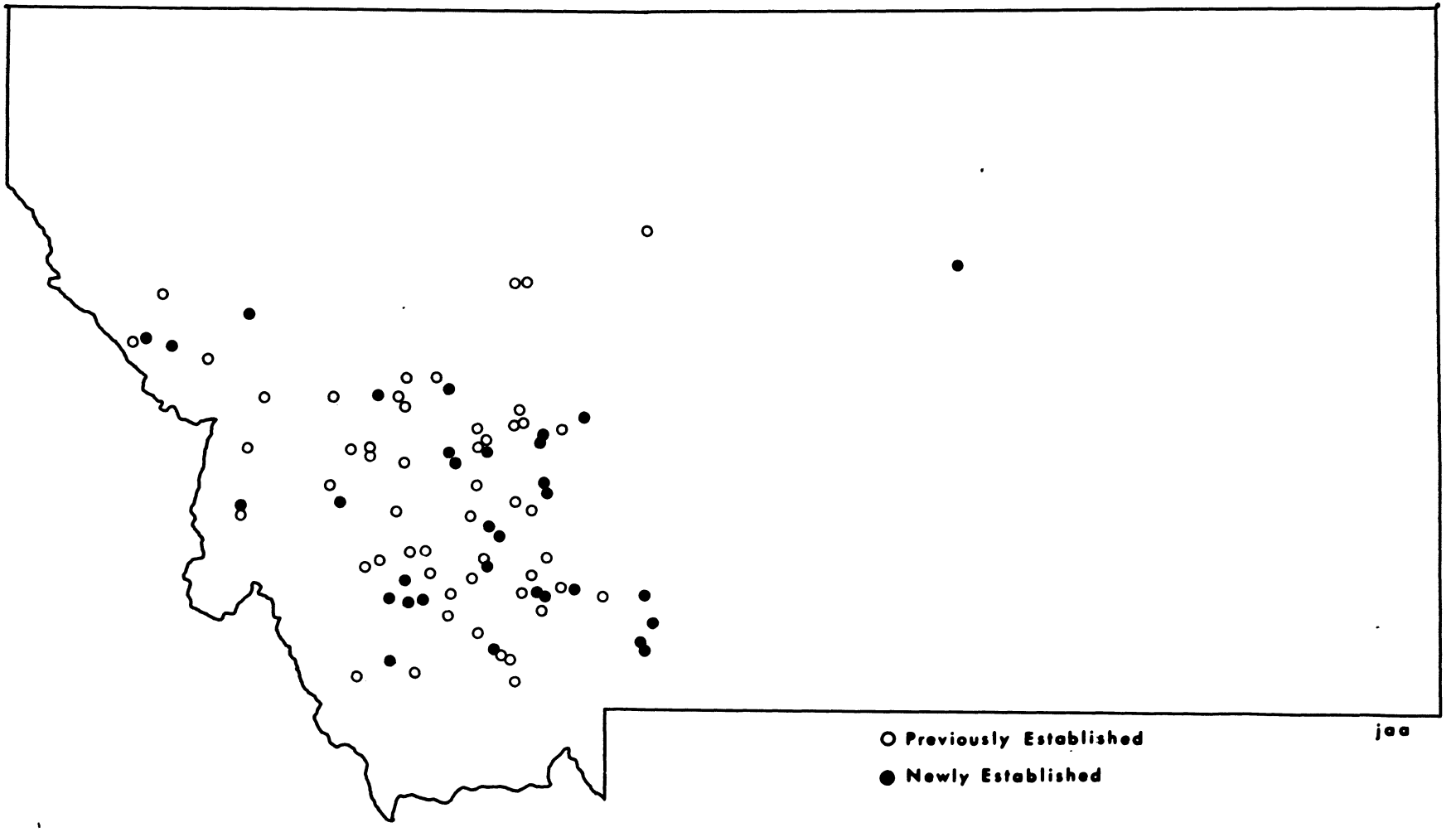

Fig. 14--Postal map, 1875.

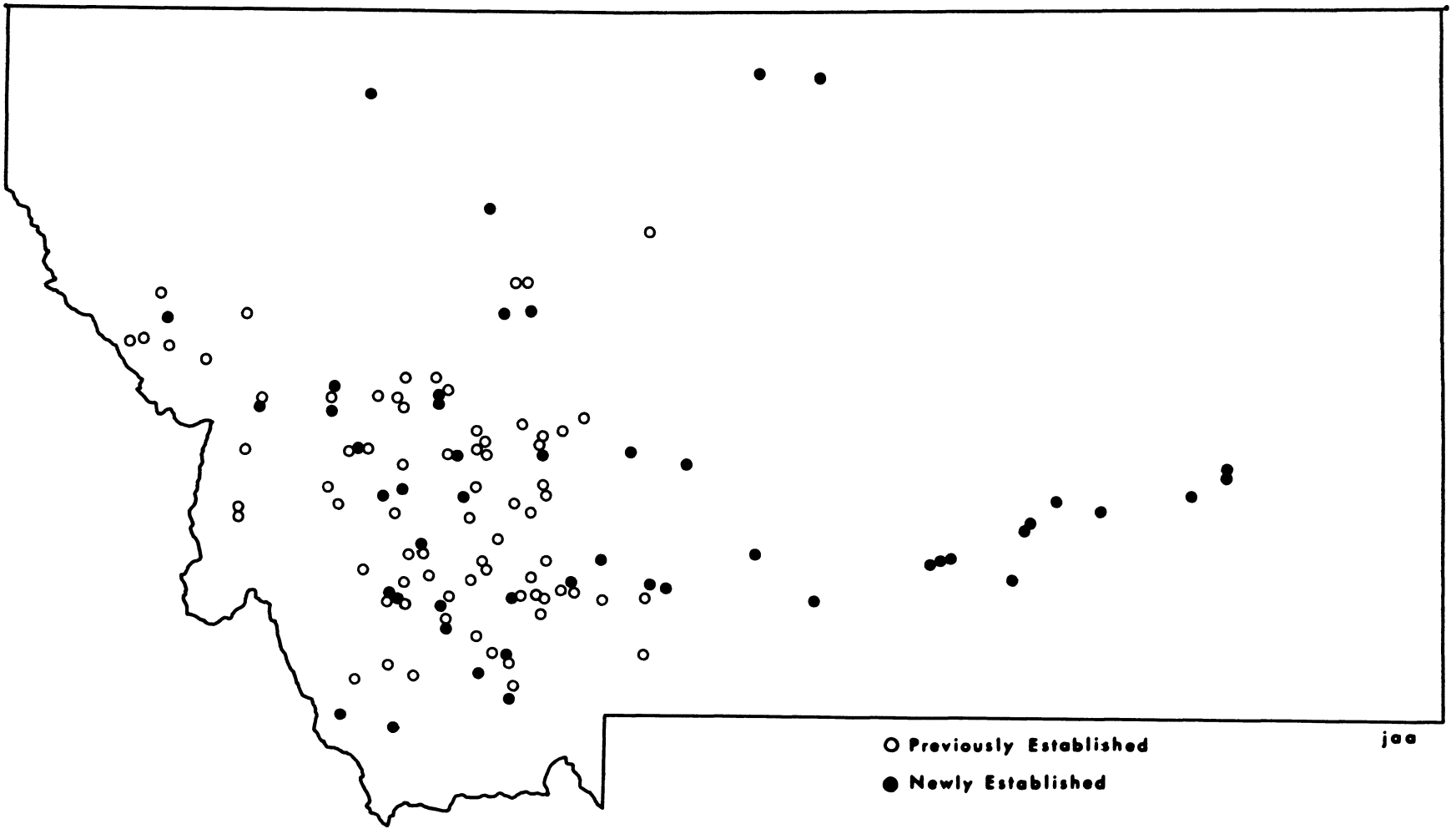

Fig. 15--Postal map, 1880.

Fort Assiniboine.

The territorial population reached 39,159 in 1880. With the shift to hard rock mining, the numerous scattered towns of 1870 were replaced by a network of fewer and larger centers (Fig. 16). After the successful transition to hard rock mining, Butte's population approximated Helena's. The transportation of equipment for new mining techniques in the seventies brought Fort Benton renewed growth. Population in these centers, plus that in newly appearing silver mining towns and remaining gold mining camps, created increased demands for agricultural products. Production around Bozeman, Deer Lodge, Boulder, and Missoula helped to meet the increased demands.

At the request of settlers, Forts Keogh, Custer, Ellis, Logan, and Assiniboine were constructed east of the mountains. The protection afforded the early residents by these military forts attracted additional settlers.

The Hierarchy, 1880

Helena was the only City in the 1880 hierarchy (Fig. 17). Its 111 establishments far outnumbered the 76 of its closest rival, Butte. The territory's only Towns were Butte, Virginia City, and Bozeman.

Isolated by distance and/or topography, the Villages of Miles City, Fort Benton, and Missoula served large, although sparsely settled, trade areas. Afforded protection by adjacent Fort Keogh, Miles City became the undisputed center of the range cattle industry. Since the great cattle herds were migratory and relatively self-sufficient, local trade centers were not required. Fort Benton continued

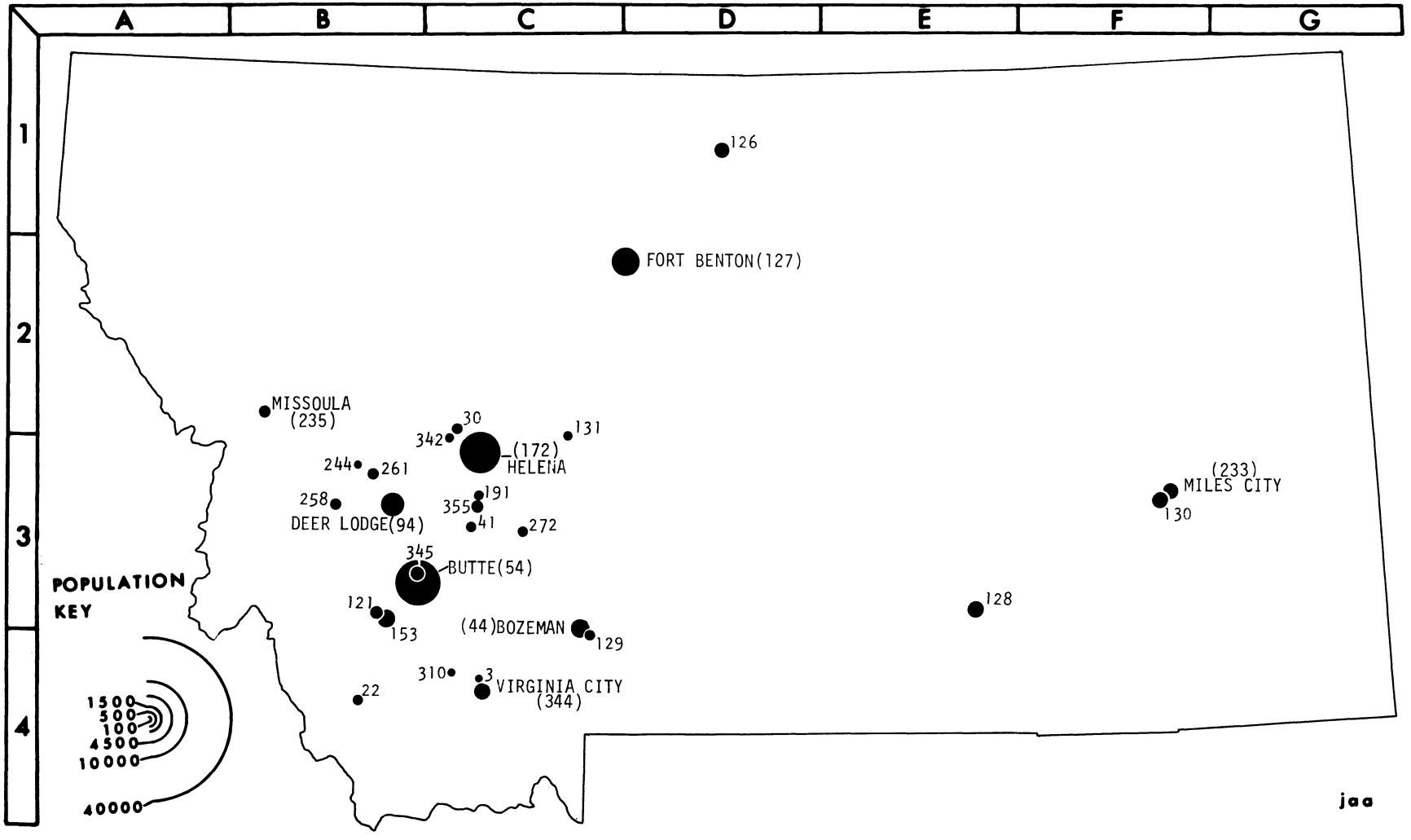

Fig. 16--Town map, 1880.

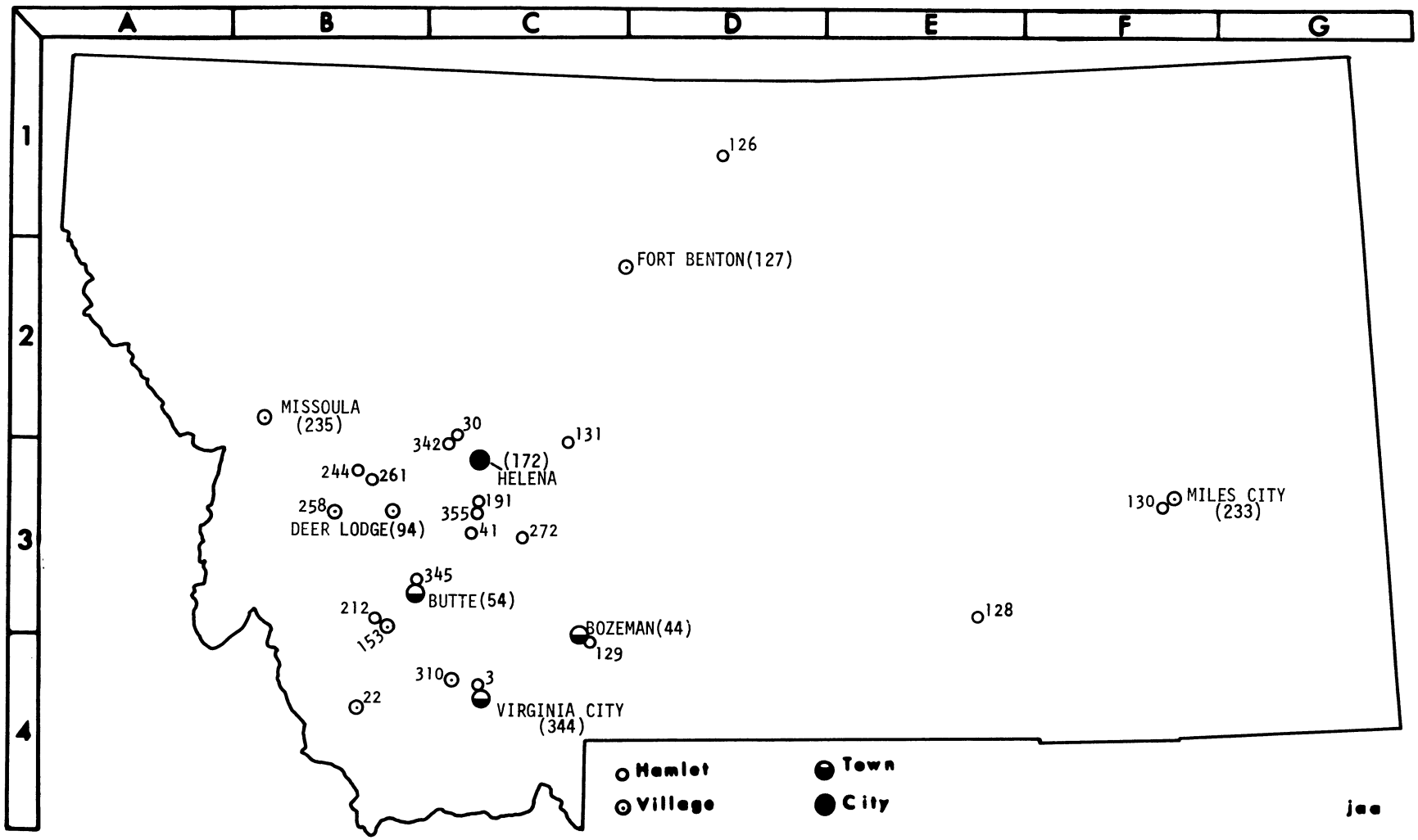

Fig. 17--Hierarchy map, 1880.

to serve as an important receiving point for incoming goods. The Village also developed as a trade center for an agricultural and livestock area to its south and west. Missoula's position as trade center for western Montana remained unchallenged. The Village was the hub for regional agriculture, lumbering, and mining activities.

CHAPTER III

DISPERSION, 1880 TO 1900

Railroads--A Transportation Revolution

By 1880, the territory's rapidly expanding population and economy required more efficient transportation links. The traditional freight wagon and oxen were no longer satisfactory as the sole means of land transport (Fig. 18). The territory needed railroads to retain development already achieved and to assure future growth.

An advertisement proclaiming the attributes of "The Old Reliable River Route - Way Ahead On Cheap Rates" was placed in an 1880 issue of the Helena Daily Herald by the Benton Steamship Line.[1] The company fought a losing battle in its attempt to lure eastward-bound passengers to their Missouri River route, and away from a stage ride to Ogden, Utah and the Union Pacific Railroad. Within a year, the railroad extended its line north from Utah to Butte and soon beyond, initiating the railroad era in Montana.

Swift growth of the railnet can be seen in Figures 19, 20, and 21. The Utah and Northern, the territory's first railroad, completed its line to just west of Butte in 1880. The Northern Pacific Railroad (N.P.) completed its southern east-west line in 1883. The Great Northern Railroad (G.N.) soon entered from the east and laid track across the territory along a more northerly route. Subsequently,

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[1]Helena Daily Herald, July 8, 1880, p. 1.

Fig. 18--Bull train, corner of Main and Park Streets, Miles City, Montana, 1881. (L. A. Huffman photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

other railroads and branch lines appeared.

Railroads helped create towns where none previously existed (Figs. 22 and 23). These centers were a stimulus to local development and functioned as foci for their developing hinterlands. Selected centers also served as railroad division points, repair stations, and yards.

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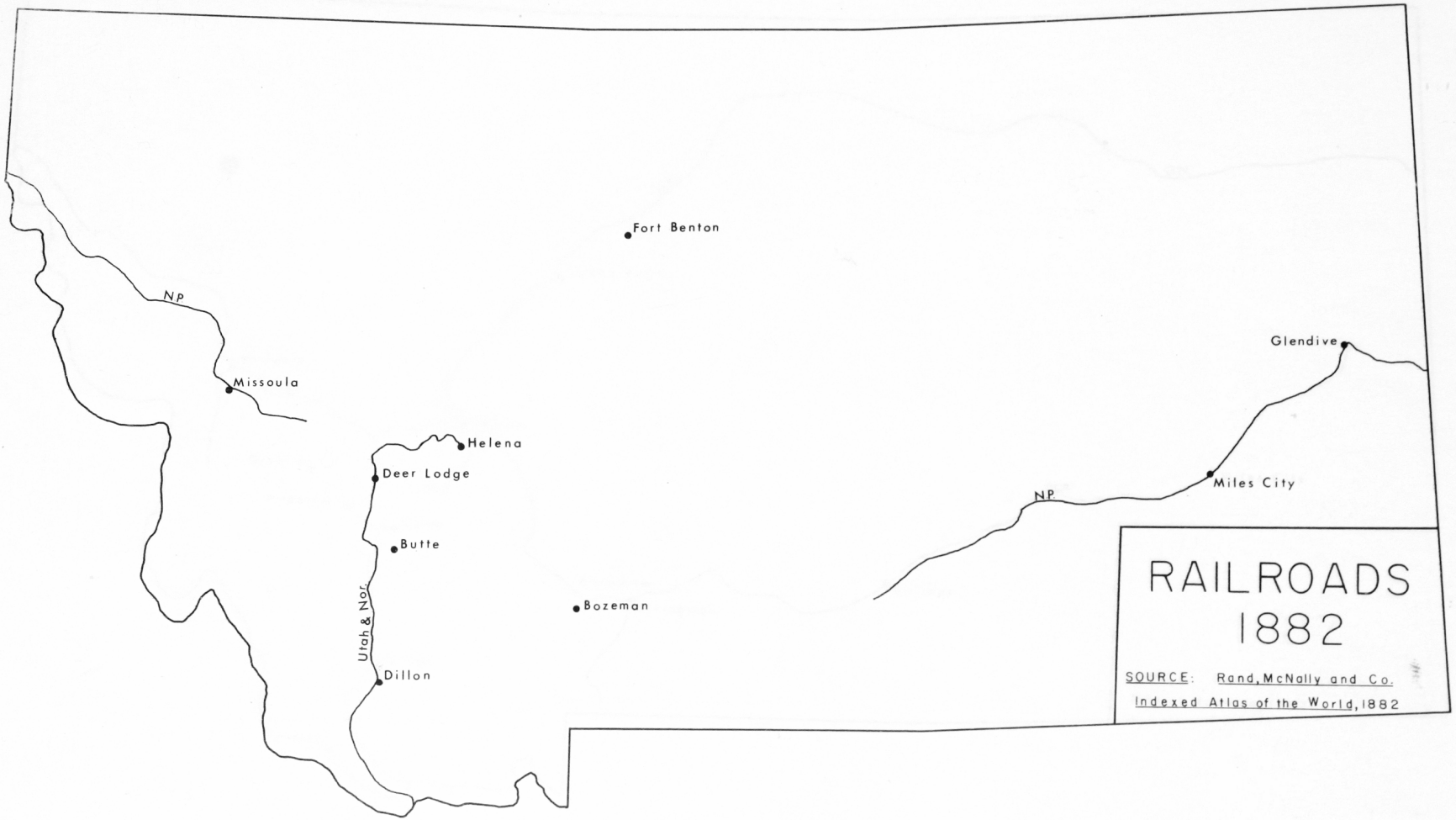

Fig. 19--Railroads, 1882.

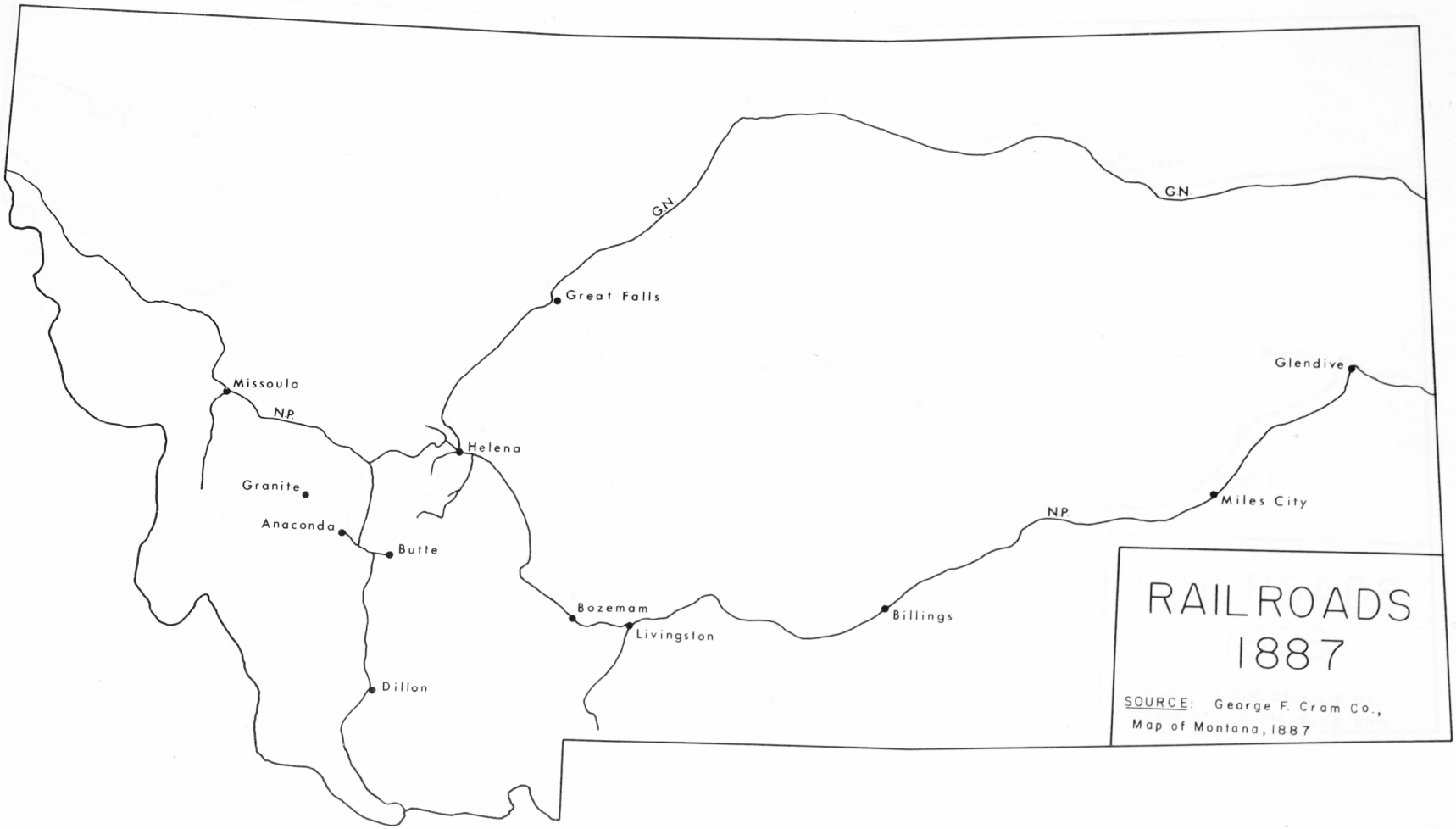

Fig. 20--Railroads, 1887.

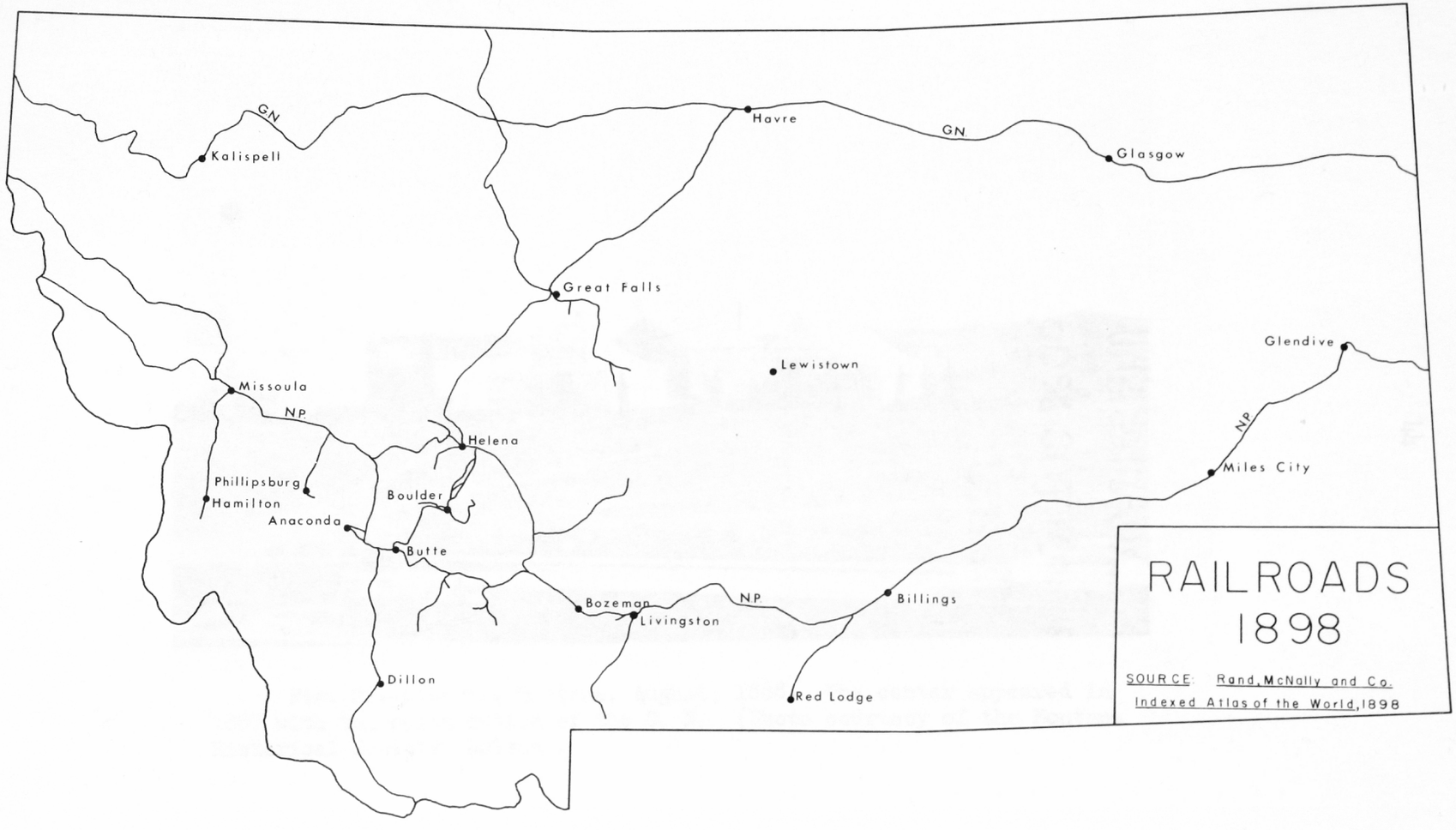

Fig. 21--Railroads, 1898.

Fig. 22--Glasgow, Montana, August, 1888. The center appeared in 1887 with the construction of the G. N. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

Fig. 23--Glasgow, Montana, July, 1889. From tents to town in less than a year. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

surveyed around the railroad facilities and an extensive campaign to attract settlers was initiated. Billings was advertised as "The Magic City" and was expected to become "The Denver of the Northwest."[2]

Towns with rail service had a competitive advantage over those without such service. The residents of Coulson, located on the Yellowstone River in the path of the projected N. P., were confident their town would prosper with the arrival of the railroad. The N. P., however, chose an adjacent site away from the river for their office and shops. Within a few years the by-passed town of Coulson disappeared as the new town of Billings flourished.

When the G. N. entered the Flathead Valley in 1892, at least one town was literally picked up and moved to a new location on the railroad. "The older boom town of Demersville virtually disappeared as stores and homes were placed on skids and moved during the early winter to the newly proposed railroad division point [Kalispell]."[3] As the contractor graded the track bed for the approaching line, the Kalispell Townsite Company sold lots and the new town took form. More than 400 people amassed at the site before the railroad's arrival.[4]

Both the construction and the presence of railroads stimu-

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[2]Waldo O. Kliewer, "The Foundation of Billings, Montana," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, XXXI (July, 1940), 255-283, passim.

[3]Flora Mae Bellefleur Isch, "The Importance of Railroads in the Development of Northwest Montana," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, XLI (Jan., 1950), 23.

[4]Missoula Weekly Gazette, Sept. 19, 1891, p. 1.

lated the state's economy (Fig. 24). Railroad construction employed large numbers of men. In 1890, the N. P. had 2,000 men at work extending its line toward Missoula. Even though they hired all who applied, they could not meet labor needs.[5] Once completed, the railroads served as inexpensive avenues to the outside markets. Mining, agriculture, livestock, timber, and all aspects of the state's economy gained access to new markets.[6]

Expanded Mining Operations

Silver

Silver mining became more widespread during the eighties. The value of Montana silver increased from $4.3 million in 1882 to $22.4 million in 1892.[7] Purchase for coinage, increased use in photography, and demand for plating and other processes helped create a larger market. Silver mining was the impetus for the establishment and growth of numerous towns; Philipsburg, Granite, Castle, Neihart, Marysville, and Wickes were the most important.

Such mining centers often attained considerable size. In addition to the actual miners, many workers were needed to operate associated reduction works. Commenting on the impact of such workers on Wickes in 1880, the Helena Daily Herald reported, "The large number of men required to operate the works has caused quite a village to

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[5]Missoula Gazette, Aug. 18, 1890, p. 1.

[6]Montana became a state in 1889.

[7]Montana, State Bureau of Agriculture, Labor, Industry and Publicity, Montana, 1909 (Helena: Independent Publishing Company, 1909), p. 66.

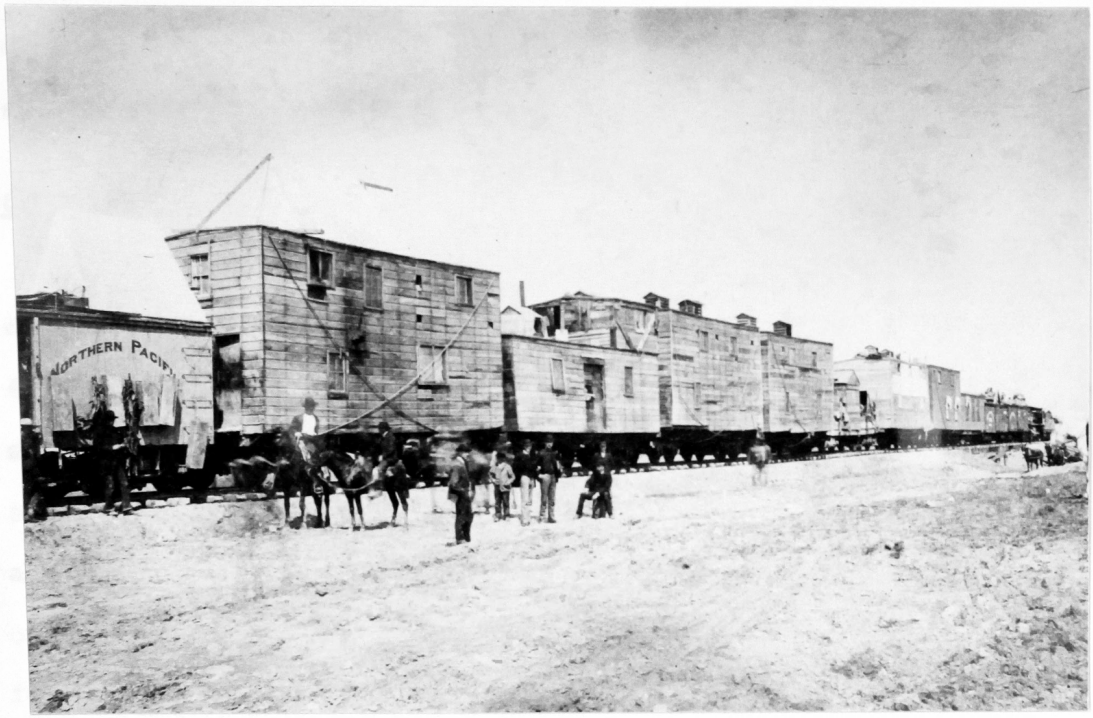

Fig. 24--Early Montana work crew train. Such trains were "towns-on-wheels." (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

spring up. . . ."[8] Within ten years, Wickes had a population of 800. Major silver producers, such as Philipsburg, Granite, Castle, and Neihart, attained populations of over 1,000. Granite may have had a population of 7,000.[9]

Butte was Montana's largest and most permanent silver producer. Mining of the white metal began there in the early eighties. The 1892 repeal of the United States Government's purchase of silver under the Sherman Silver Purchasing Act and international developments

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[8]Helena Daily Herald, July 6, 1880, p. 2.

[9]A. C. McMillan, "A Young Clergyman Looks At Granite," Montana the Magazine of Western History, XIV (July, 1964), 67.

brought a collapse to the silver market. Many of the state's silver-only mining centers declined; the Butte district continued to produce silver as a by-product of the copper mining operations.

Copper

The Butte mining district, having become a major producer during the eighties, was the center for Montana's copper industry. A copper smelter was located at Meaderville by 1880. Within two years, sufficient ore was found in Butte's Anaconda mine to require the construction of a major new smelter.[10] In order to take advantage of abundant water, the new smelter was built twenty miles west of Butte on Warm Springs Creek. The smelter works, the world's largest, formed the nucleus for the new town of Anaconda. Six years after the 1884 completion of the works, the town had a population of almost 4,000. By 1894, the facility was handling 4,000 tons of copper ore daily.[11]

In the early nineties, several large corporate concerns, led by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, controlled Butte's copper production. Efficient management by these companies helped the Butte district and the state of Montana, to benefit from the electrical revolution that had been sweeping the world since the 1879 introduction of the electric light bulb. Value of state copper production increased

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[10]Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, "The Evolution of Copper Mining in Butte," p. 3 (Mimeographed.)

[11]Montana Standard, Oct. 12, 1958, page unknown.

from $1.5 million in 1882 to $40.9 million in 1899.[12] Butte surpassed the northern Michigan mines to become the world's greatest copper producer.

Coal

Coal mined in Montana increased from 41,467 tons in 1888 to more than 1.5 million tons seven years later. Production came from two major areas: fields southeast of Great Falls and the Red Lodge area. The towns of Belt, Stockett, Sand Coulee, and Armington were major producers in the Great Falls field. Red Lodge, Fromberg, Carbando, Joliet, Jardine, Gardiner, and Electric were large producers in the Red Lodge district.

The expanded silver and copper mining operations required vast amounts of coal and coke. Coal-fired locomotives consumed enough coal to merit the operation of railroad-owned mines such as those at Timberline and Stockett.

Between 1880 and 1900, Montana's population increased by more than 600 per cent.[13] This greatly expanded population boosted coal consumption. Fuel was needed for thousands of new homes and for power plants serving a more electricity-conscious public.

Expanded Lumbering

The decades of the eighties and nineties were times of major

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[12]Montana, State Bureau of Agriculture, Labor, Industry and Publicity, Montana, 1909, p. 66.

[13]Population increased from 39,159 to 243,329.

expansion in the state's lumber industry. The increased state population, market demands in the Midwest and East, railroad construction, and hard rock mining operations were major factors in the industry's growth.

Although the commercial cutting of timber on federal lands was prohibited under federal law by the 1878 Timber Cutting Act, lumber interests still conducted wholesale harvesting on federal land in western Montana.[14] State mining and timber concerns broadly interpreted the law's provision allowing individuals to cut timber on the public domain for personal use to include the supplying of timber to mines and railroads.

The 600 per cent increase in state population between 1880 and 1900 created a need for new homes, stores, office buildings, sidewalks, and other wooden structures. Hard rock mining and refining operations also depended on timber. By 1888, the Anaconda Company alone used 40,000 feet of timber daily in their mines.[15] Smelter facilities at Anaconda consumed 495 cords of wood daily and used 2 million feet of lumber each month for additions, repairs, and other changes.[16]

Railroad construction during this twenty year span also required additional timber. A series of sawmills east and west of Missoula began operation in 1882. Owned by the Montana Improvement

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[14] Timber Cutting Act, Statutes at Large, XX, Sec. 1, 88 (1878).

[15] Toole, Uncommon Land, p. 159.

[16] Montana Standard, Oct. 12, 1958, page unknown.

Company, these mills were to supply timber for 925 miles of track between Miles City, Montana and Walla Walla, Washington.[17] Each mile of track used 3,000 ties. Tressels and railroad buildings created additional timber demands. Railroad service and eventual preferential east-bound freight rates made Montana lumber competitive on midwestern and eastern markets. The state's position was enhanced by the depletion of the Great Lakes area forests.

Montana produced 26.1 million feet of lumber in 1882; Missoula County's five mills accounted for 9 per cent of this production.[18] By 1892, state lumber production totaled 518 million feet, a sixteen-fold increase over the 1882 level.[19] Missoula County then produced 500 million feet, or 96 per cent of the state total.[20] Western Montana became the center of the state lumber industry and Missoula County, and Missoula, the headquarters.

Spread of the Livestock Industry

Stocking of the plains portion of the territory continued into the eighties. This occupation was accelerated by removal of Indians, rail service, and the potential for great profits. Herds driven east from western Montana were augmented by herds driven in

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[17]Toole, Uncommon Land, pp. 160-161.

[18]J. P. Woolman, Annual Report of the Auditor and Treasurer of the Territory of Montana, 1882 (Helena: Independent Steam Printing House, 1883), p. 10.

[19]E. A. Kenney, Annual Report of the State Auditor, 1892 (Helena: Independent Publishing Company, 1892), p. 72.

[20]Ibid.

from areas to the south, especially Texas (Fig. 25).

Both the number of cattle in the territory and the percentage on the plains increased during the early eighties. In 1882, approximately 50 per cent of the territory's 287,200 cattle and 52 per cent of the 362,700 sheep were on the plains.[21] Within three years, approximately 70 per cent of the 613,000 cattle and 68 per cent of the 798,600 sheep were in the plains area counties.[22]

As cattlemen, and later, sheepherders, moved onto the plains, the center of the livestock industry was pushed eastward. Meagher County was the center of both the cattle and sheep industry in 1882.[23] By 1885, Custer County was the center of the cattle industry; the sheep industry remained centered in Meagher County.[24] The eastward shift of cattle was reflected in Dawson County where the number of cattle increased from 341 in 1882 to 71,929 in 1885.[25]

Cattle raising on the plains became big business and was soon dominated by wealthy individuals and stock companies. An 1885 issue of the Great Falls Tribune warned the remaining small operators:

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[21]Woolman, Annual Report, 1882, pp. 5-6. (The plains area then included Choteau, Custer, Dawson, and Meagher Counties.)

[22]J. P. Woolman, Annual Report of the Auditor and Treasurer of the Territory of Montana, 1885 (Helena: Fisk Brothers, 1886), p. 6. (The plains area then included Choteau, Custer, Dawson, Meagher, and Yellowstone Counties.)

[23]The county then had 70,371 cattle and 148,549 sheep.

[24]In 1885 Custer County had 176,000 cattle and Meagher County, 331,000 sheep.

[25]Woolman, Annual Report, 1882, p. 5, and Woolman, Annual Report, 1885, p. 6.

Fig. 25--Montana cattle herd on the northern plains. Such large herds were commonplace by the 1880's. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

> The small owner has no business on the cattle ranges of Montana today. . . . But a man with sufficient capital to cope with the cattle lords can invest his money to no better advantage than in Montana range cattle.[26]

Potential profits reported in books, such as James Brisbin's The Beef Bonanza and Baron Walter von Richthofen's Cattle Raising on the Plains of North America, attracted outside capital. Capitalists were anxious to buy into a business in which an initial investment of $20 per head of livestock resulted in an average profit of $39.[27]

The speculative boom in the range cattle industry continued until the "Hard Winter" of 1886-87. During that winter,

> There was a heavy snow in November, then a thaw in mid-December, followed by several months of uniformly low temperature and bitter winds. The thaw produced a nearly impenetrable ice sheet which was covered by more snow.[28]

The severe weather caused immense losses in the number of range cattle. Mortality may have averaged 85 per cent in some areas.[29]

With the great cattle losses came the closing of the open range. A new permanence displaced the traditional mobility of the range livestock industry. Smaller herds, barbed wire, and greater dependence on winter feed characterized the more carefully managed industry. The number of cattle increased steadily under the new system.

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[26]Great Falls Tribune, June 11, 1885, p. 2.

[27]Anna Zellick, "A History of Fergus County, Montana; 1879-1915" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1945), ch. 3, p. 7.

[28]Toole, Uncommon Land, p. 145.

[29]Zellick, "Fergus County," ch. 3, p. 16.

With the relative decline in the importance of cattle, came an increase in the importance of sheep. Sheep had fared better than cattle during the winter of 1886-87. Their numbers increased from 798,000 in 1885 to 1.1 million in 1888.[30] They continued to flourish during the 1890's and numbered 6.1 million by 1900.[31]

The Patterns, 1880 to 1900

Post Offices and Towns, 1880 to 1890

Figure 26 suggests major new habitation in central, southeastern, and extreme eastern Montana. The rapid influx of population into these areas was linked with the spread of the cattle and sheep industries. Eastward migration of livestock in the central part of the territory moved cattle as far east as the Musselshell River. Rail service in the east along the Yellowstone River and anticipated service along the Missouri and Milk Rivers stimulated the stock industry in those areas.

The three aforementioned areas link to delimit an arcuate front or frontier zone in the eastern half of the territory. Concave to the north, the zone parallels the Yellowstone River from the eastern Montana border, continues southwest to the confluence of the Bighorn River, and arcs to the northwest along the eastern front of the Big Snowy Mountains and through the junction of the Marias and Missouri

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[30] Woolman, Annual Report, 1885, p. 6, and Jas Sullivan, Annual Report of the Auditor and Treasurer of the Territory of Montana, 1888 (Helena: Independent Print, 1889), p. 6.

[31] U. S. Department of Interior, Census Office, Census Reports, Agriculture, Twelfth Census: 1900, Vol. V, Part 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 457.

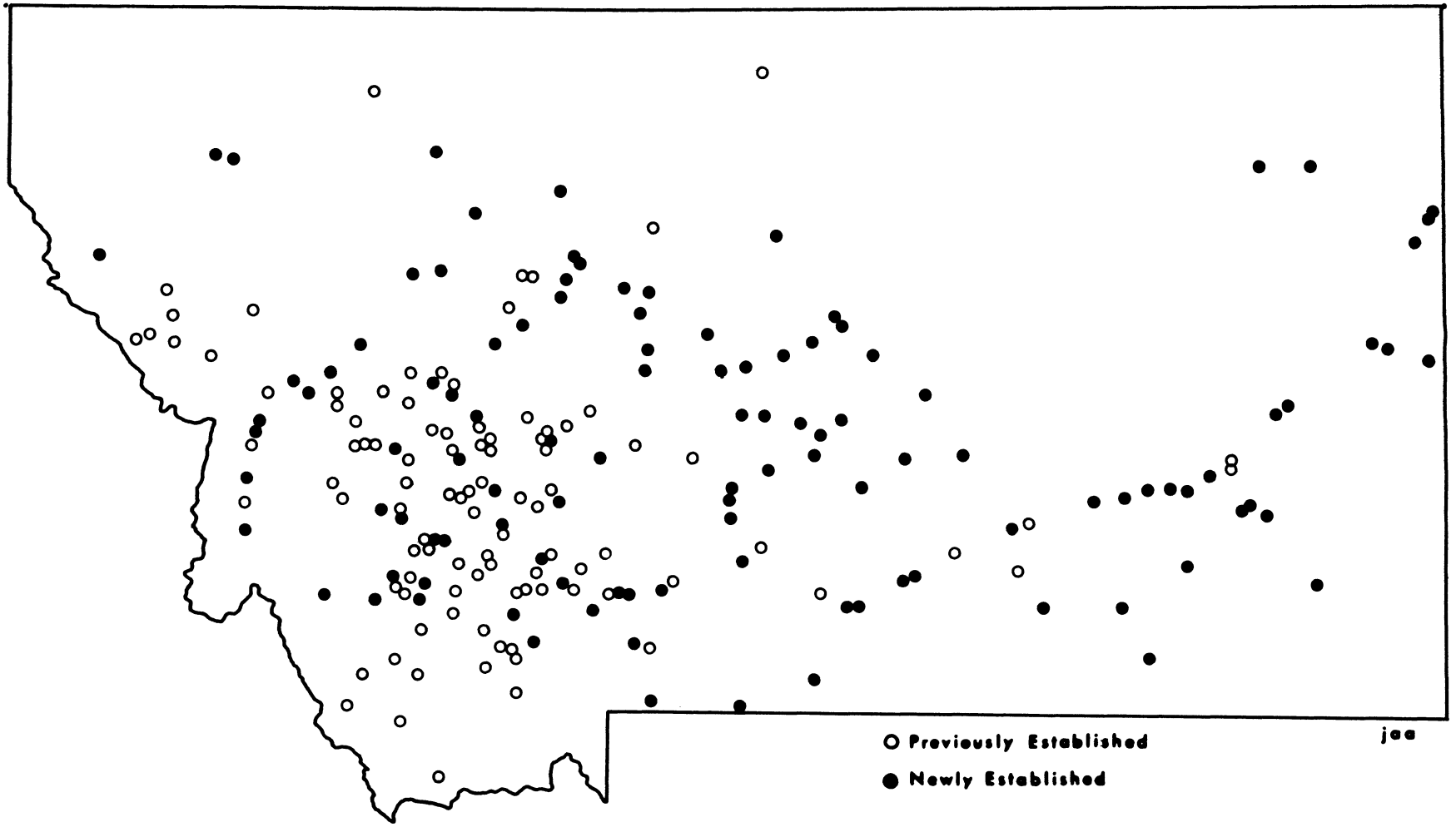

Fig. 26--Postal map, 1885.

Rivers. The area to the north of this arc comprises the Isolated Eastern Interior. A contraction of this area can be noted in subsequent maps.

Post office locations in the west suggest a general infilling of population. New areas of settlement are suggested by the clustering of new offices in: 1) the mining settlements of the Great Falls area, 2) the coal mining centers north of Yellowstone National Park, 3) the agricultural settlement in the Flathead Valley. The 1890 postal map suggests denser settlement in previously settled areas (Fig. 27).

The greater density and spread of settlement indicated in Figures 26 and 27 are reflected in the 1890 town map (Fig. 28). In 1890, the combined populations of the older towns of Helena, Butte, and Missoula, and the new towns of Anaconda and Great Falls approximated the territory's 1880 population. Growth of previously existing centers and the appearance of new towns accompanied the 360 per cent increase in state population between 1880 and 1890.

Helena remained the largest town. Serving as a financial and trade center, Helena's population grew by 10,000 during the eighties. The capital city was the territory's rail hub by 1887. Trunk lines, carrying all east-west traffic, and numerous branch lines, converged at the town. Helena was centered in a rich mining district. Principal mining and refining centers, such as Marysville, Wickes, Elkhorn, Rimini, and East Helena were tributary; some were linked by direct rail service.

Butte retained its position as the state's second largest town.

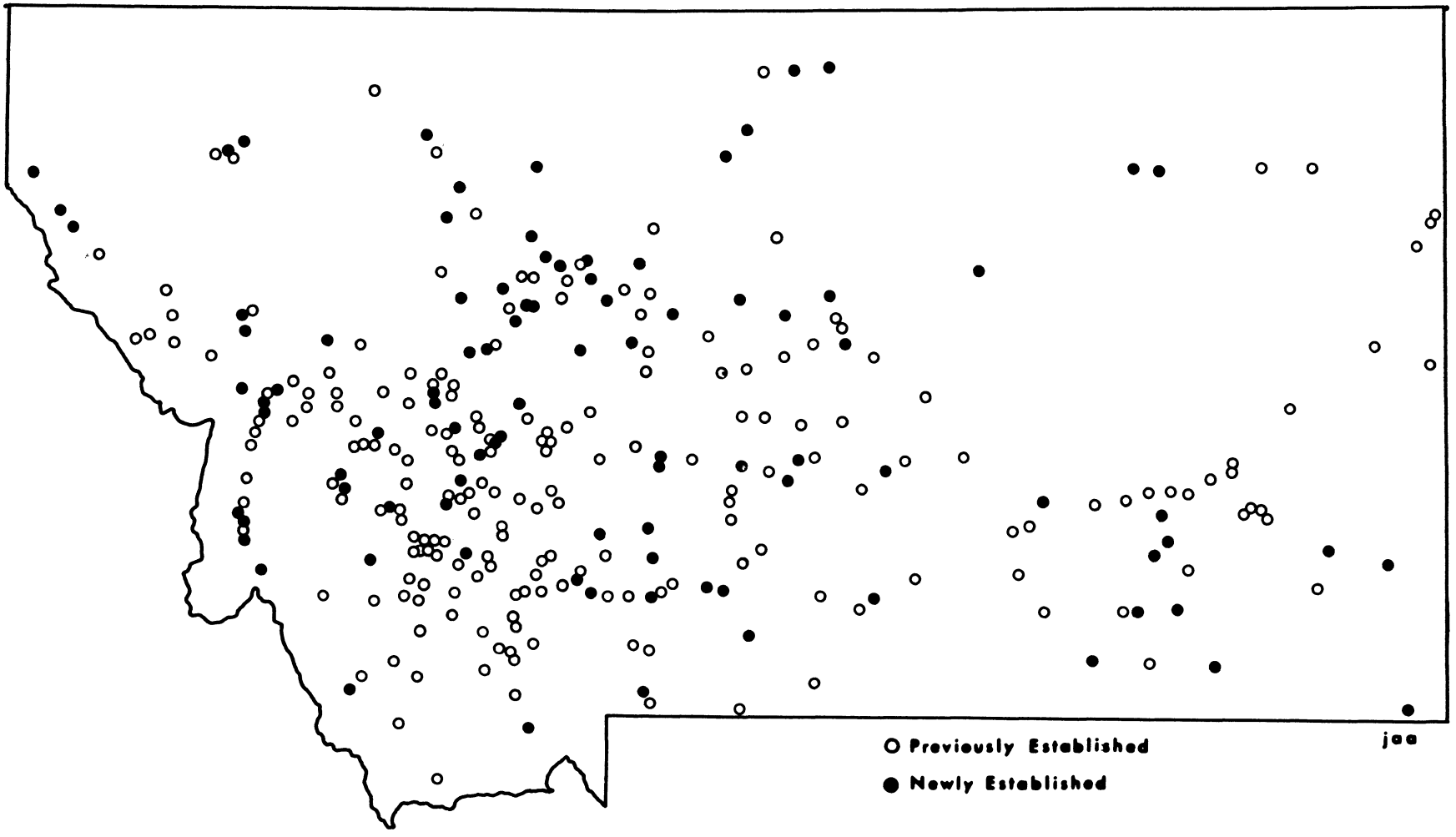

Fig. 27--Postal map, 1890.

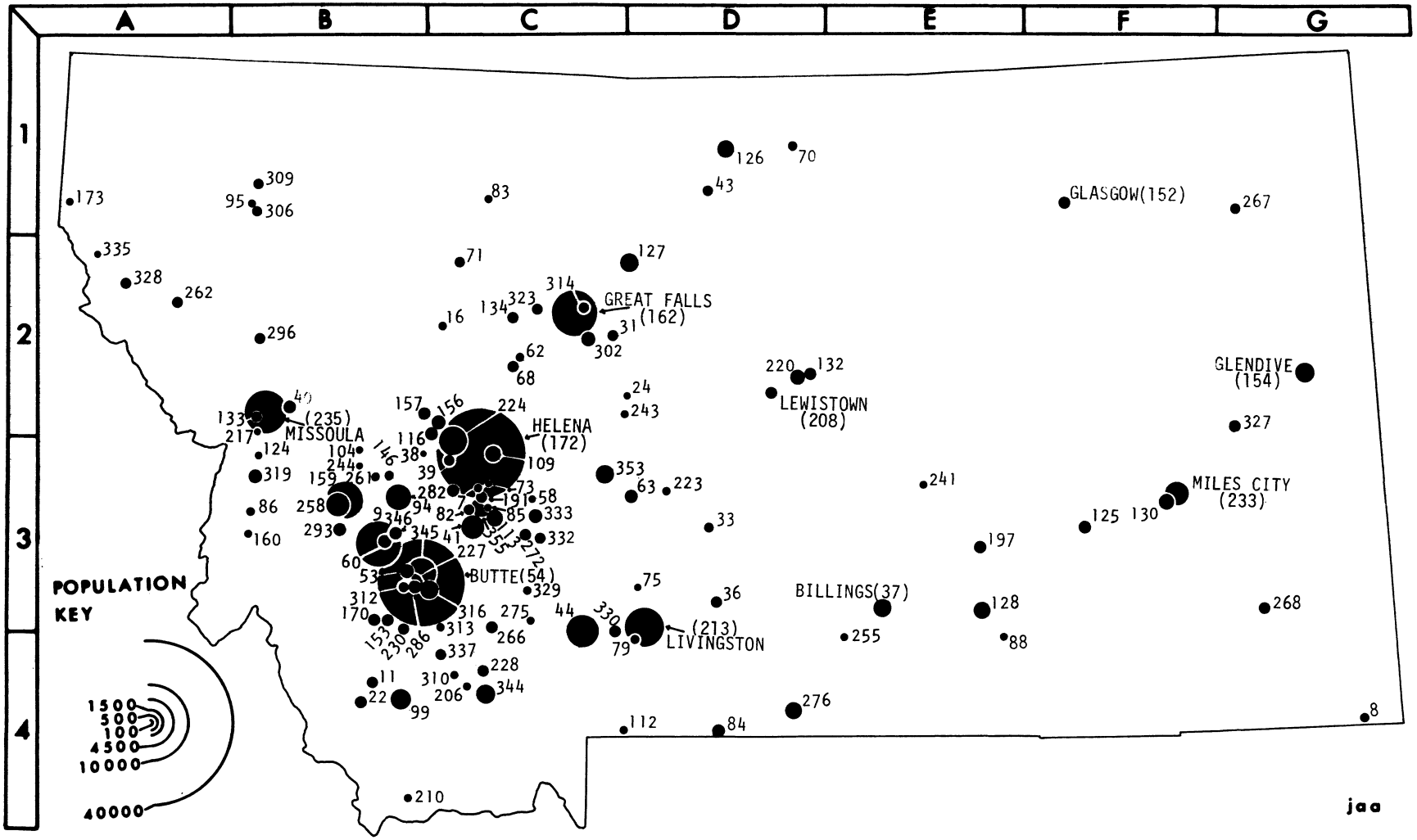

Fig. 28--Town map, 1890.

It and Anaconda were the nuclei for a rich copper and silver mining and refining district. The two centers and their environs had more than 20,000 inhabitants. Miners and related workers totaled 3,000 in Butte; the smelter works in Anaconda employed 2,200.[32]

Great Falls was the state's third largest town. The center developed after the 1887 arrival of the N. P. Within three years, it had a population of almost 4,000. Abundant coal to the southeast at Belt and Sand Coulee, locally fertile agricultural and stock raising lands, and the hydroelectric generating potential of the falls on the Missouri River, helped assure Great Falls' early success. The readily available hydro power was a major factor in the establishment of a silver-lead smelter and a copper smelting and refining works in the town by 1890.

Missoula was Montana's fifth largest town. Its position as receiving and distributing point for extreme western Montana was enhanced by the arrival of rail service. The N. P. designated Missoula as division point and built a hospital, roundhouse, and shops there. Situated at the juncture of several major valleys, and favored by locally fertile soils, abundant virgin timber, and moderate climate, the town became a significant exporter of foodstuffs and the undisputed center of the state's lumber industry. Increased population and mining activities in the centers to the east generated increased demands for Missoula area products. Topography, and later, improved

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[32]R. L. Polk and Company, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory, Vol. VII (St. Paul: R. L. Polk and Company, 1890), pp. 1566 and 1584.

roads and rail lines, funneled western Montana products to Missoula. The foodstuffs, timber, and retail trade generated in and around the string of Bitterroot Valley towns of Lolo, Florence, Stevensville, Corvallis, and Grantsdale were major factors in Missoula's growth and prosperity.

Granite and Philipsburg were important silver producers. Their combined 1890 population was 2,500. Philipsburg, and the Flint Creek Mining District of which it was part, were served by the twenty-six mile long Philipsburg Branch of the N. P.

The new railroad town of Livingston was the gateway to Yellowstone National Park and the center for a rich coal, sheep, and cattle area. The town was also a division point on the N. P. Subsequent construction and operation of railroad shops, roundhouse, and supply stores stimulated growth. The young town soon surpassed nearby Bozeman in size.

Contrasting the large scale urbanization of western Montana, the eastern plains remained void of major population centers. Great distances and dry land were principle deterents to major settlement. Most townsites were located in linear bands along rail lines and adjacent to major rivers. A lineal arrangement of centers can be seen along the Yellowstone River Valley and the N. P. Here were the southern plains' largest towns and livestock centers of Glendive, Miles City, Forsyth, and Billings.

By 1890, small urban centers appeared in the Missouri and Milk River Valleys adjacent to the recently laid G. N. Glasgow, Poplar, and Chinook were among the earliest. Glasgow was created by

the railroad to serve as a terminal point; a roundhouse, machine shop, and hospital were built there. Like the other early centers along the "High Line," Glasgow exported cattle and sheep.

The closing of the open range produced a need for more local trade centers. Miles City no longer monopolized the plains cattle industry. The Isolated Eastern Interior mentioned earlier, is apparent on the 1890 town map. Rail penetration by the G. N. along the north, and settlement in the Lewistown area reduced the Interior to that area east of Lewistown and between the lines of the G. N. and N. P.

The Hierarchy, 1890

Increased population during the eighties produced more centers in each of the four hierarchical levels (Fig. 29). Between 1880 and 1890, the number of Hamlets increased from 16 to 71, Villages from 8 to 28, Towns from 3 to 14, and Cities from 1 to 6.

Most development occurred in the western part of the state, where all Cities and most Towns were located in 1890. Missoula, Anaconda, Butte, Bozeman, and Great Falls became Cities along with Helena. Increased population and a higher standard of living in these centers and their tributary areas produced a need for more types of goods. For instance, in 1880, Missoula had a population of approximately 300; Missoula County's population was 2,537. With only nineteen establishments at the time, Missoula was classed as a Village (Table 2). By 1890, the City of Missoula had a population of 3,426 and Missoula County had 14,426 inhabitants. A series of Hamlets and Villages devel-

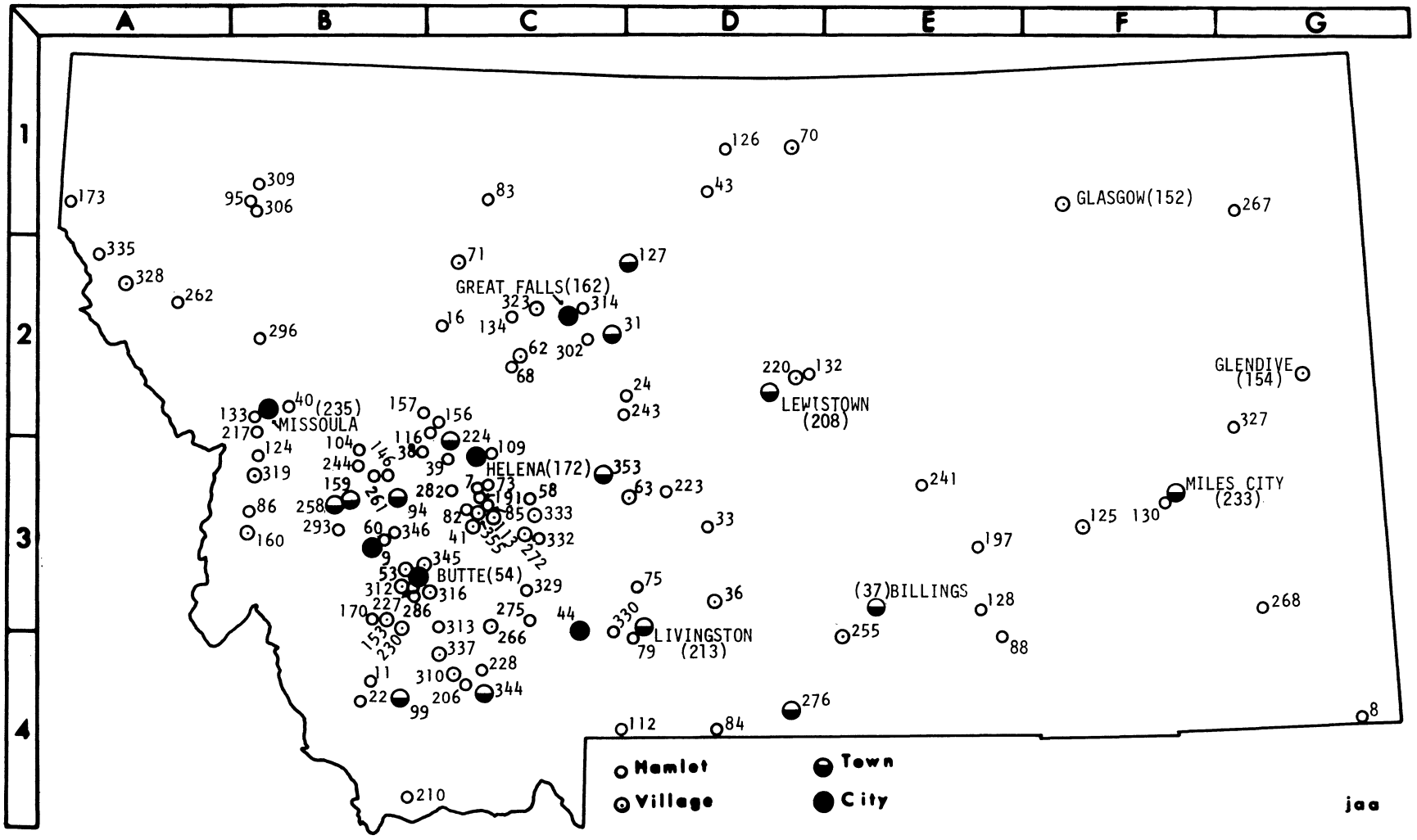

Fig. 29--Hierarchy map, 1890.

oped tributary to the City. The number of Missoula's establishments rose to more than 170.[33] These business houses offered a much wider range of goods. A greater selection was available from stores specializing in furniture, jewelry, musical instruments, farm implements, shoes, and sporting goods. The service sector had expanded to include more physicians, barbers, lawyers, photographers, dentists, banks, hotels, and wholesale establishments.

TABLE 2

ESTABLISHMENTS IN MISSOULA, 1880

Type		Type	
General Store	3	Liquors	1
Drugs	1	Dentist	1
Hardware	1	Stationery, etc.	1
Saw Mill	1	Hotel	1
Livery	1	Physician	1
Meats	1	Brewery	1
Newspaper	1	Saloon	1
Blacksmith	2	Publisher	1

Source: R. G. Dun and Company, Reference Book, Vol. L (Philadelphia: R. G. Dun and Company, 1880), not paginated.

Sales generated by the increased population and standard of living in the City and tributary area made the operation of new establishments feasible. Hamlets, such as Plains could offer few goods. Villages, such as Stevensville provided the same goods plus some additional ones (Table 3). It was necessary to travel to Missoula to obtain higher order goods, such as furniture, jewelry, musical instruments, farm machinery and higher order services offered by banks,

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[33] Ibid., pp. 1703-1710.

lawyers, dentists, and photographers. A similar relationship existed among other groups of Hamlets, Villages, Towns and Cities throughout the state.

TABLE 3

ESTABLISHMENTS IN PLAINS AND STEVENSVILLE, 1890

Plains (Hamlet)		Stevensville (Village)	
Type		Type	
General Store	1	General Store	4
Hotel	1	Hotel	1
Saloon	2	Saloon	1
Blacksmith	2	Blacksmith	2
		Physician	2
		Drugs	1
		Meats	1
		Newspaper	1
		Milliner	1
		Express Agent	1

Source: R. L. Polk and Company, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory, Vol. VII (St. Paul: R. L. Polk and Company, 1890), pp. 1716 and 1724).

The plain's economic dependence on cattle and sheep required unpopulated expanses. Low population and productivity could not support a dense hierarchical network like that in the western portion of the state.

A shift from open range livestock operations to more stationary ranching in the late eighties created a need for additional trade centers; yet, the thinly settled eastern portion of the state could not support Cities. The Towns of Miles City, Billings, and Lewistown were the highest order eastern centers. Scattered between and generally along rail lines were Hamlets and Villages.

The trade areas for eastern centers were vast. Polk's 1890 Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory lists thirty livestock ranches and cattle companies with the Town of Miles City. Figure 30 shows the approximate location of each of these concerns. Although the list is probably incomplete, it suggests the large area served by Miles City.

Post Offices and Towns, 1890 to 1900

Many new post offices appeared during the nineties (Fig. 31). Additions were state-wide, although most were in the western half. Concentrated new settlement is suggested along the recently completed G. N. and in the Red Lodge coal district of south-central Montana.

State population rose to 243,329 in 1900 as urbanization accelerated (Fig. 32). Three major nodes of population and economic activity dominated. The Butte-Anaconda node had a population of approximately 60,000. Great Falls, less than twenty years old, and Helena, each had more than 10,000 residents.

Butte surpassed Helena to become the state's largest town. The 30,000-plus population within its two square mile area was almost triple that of Helena in 1890. The Butte mines were then producing 26 per cent of the world's copper and 51 per cent of the United States' total. Working at depths down to 2,000 feet, the 7,500 miners and related workers produced an estimated $39 million in copper, $6 million in silver, and $3 million in gold in 1899.[34]

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[34]R. L. Polk and Company, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory, Vol. XII (St. Paul: R. L. Polk and Company, 1900), pp. 2048-2049.

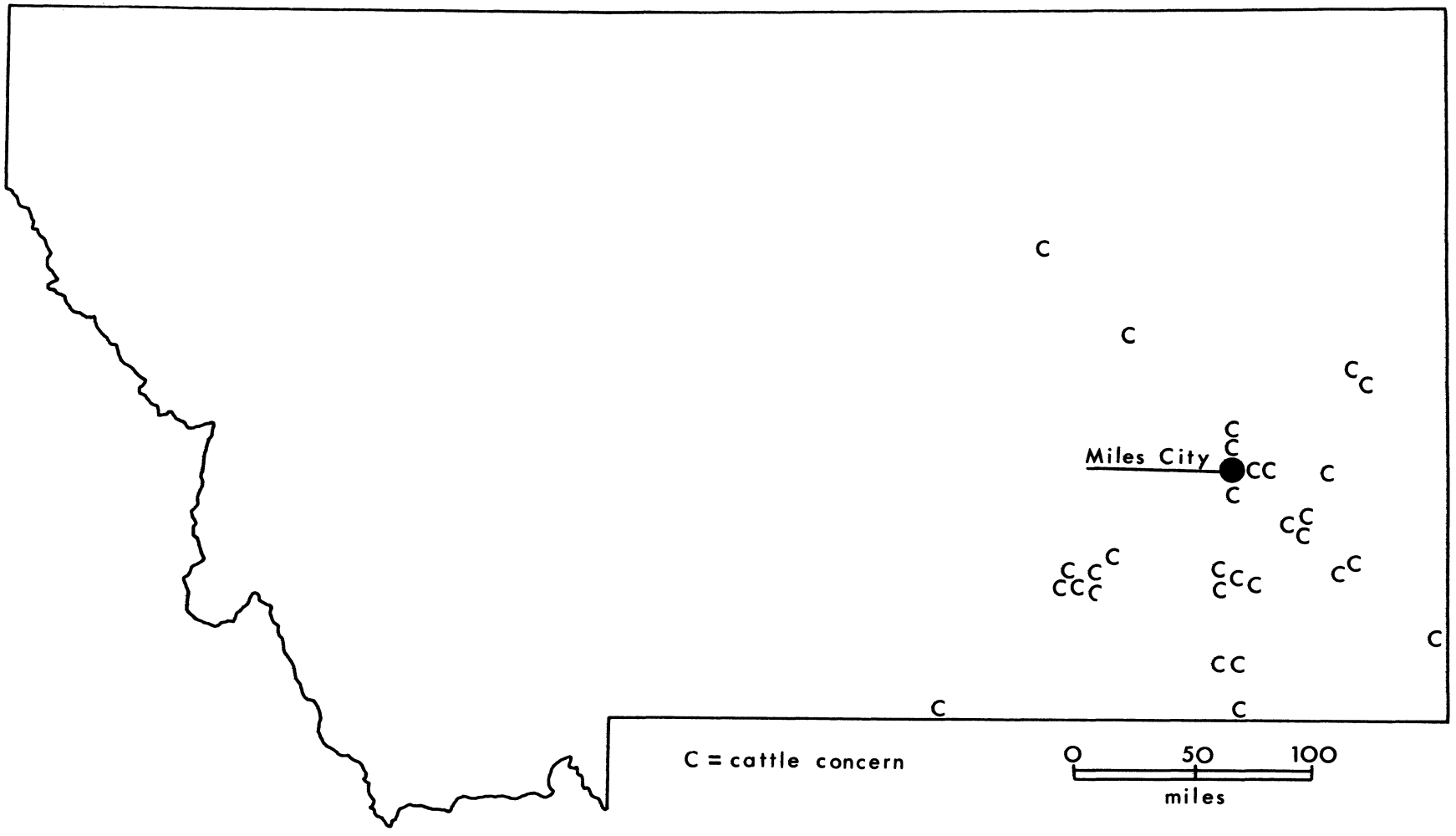

Fig. 30--Location of cattle concerns tributary to Miles City, Montana, 1890.

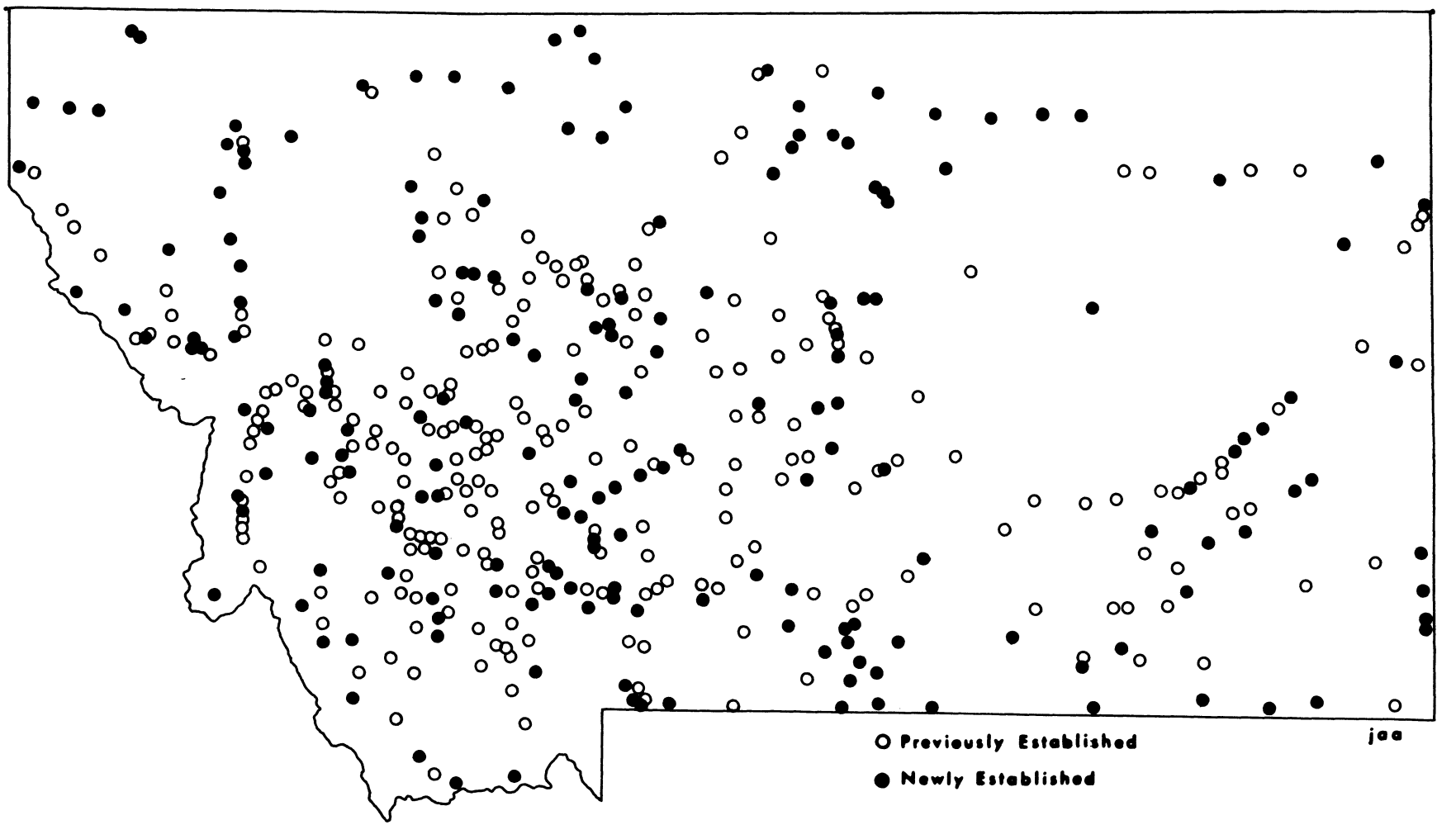

Fig. 31--Postal map, 1900.

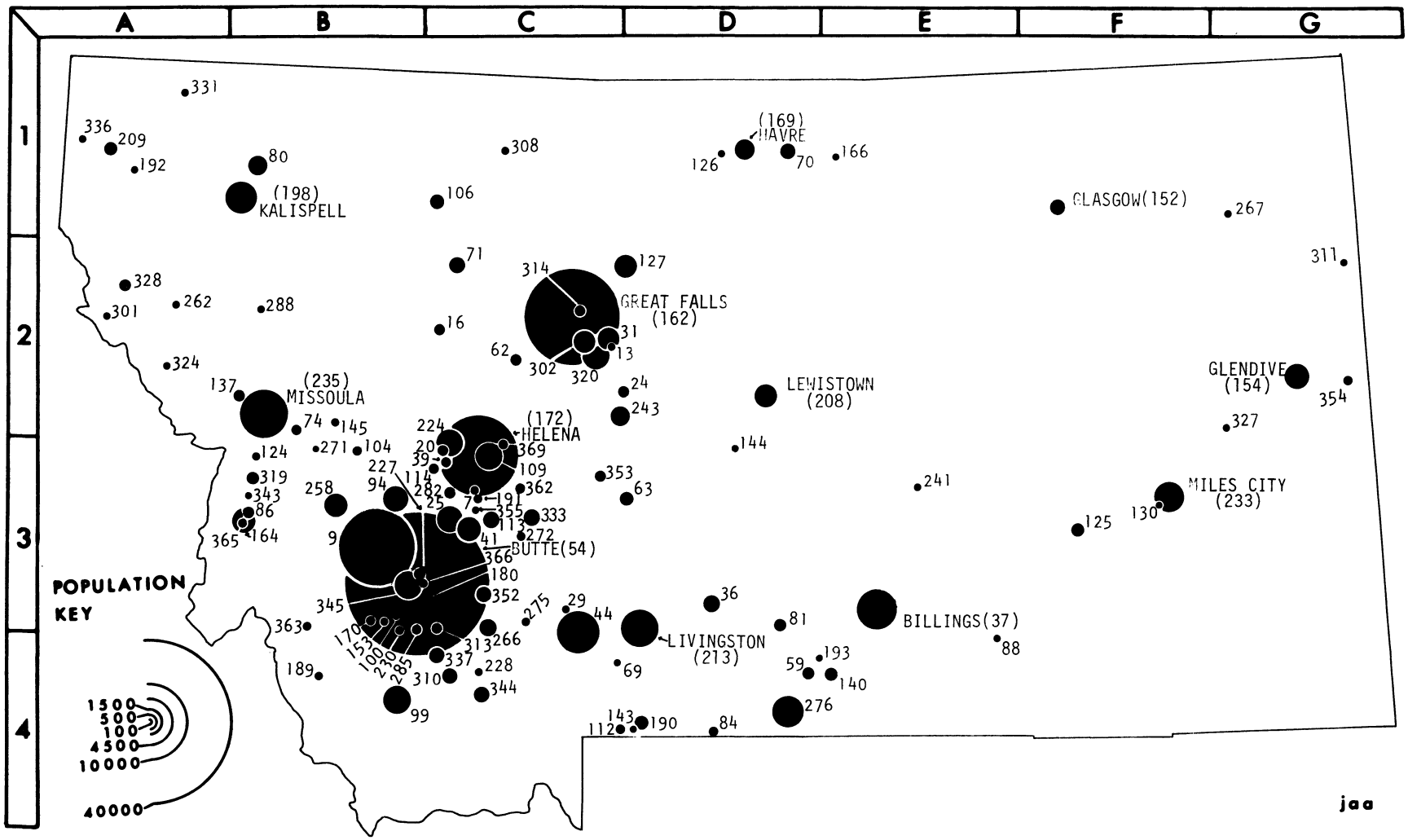

Fig. 32--Town map, 1900.

Although Butte had three mills and five smelters of its own, most of its ore was shipped by rail to Anaconda.[35] Here, ore handled increased to 5,000 tons daily. The value of copper produced monthly at the Anaconda Copper Mining Company's giant smelter rose to $2 million.[36] Greater population accompanied the increased smelting operations; the town became the state's third largest with 9,453 inhabitants.

Great Falls, almost as young as Anaconda, was the state's second largest town. In addition to being the nation's largest primary wool market, it was also an important ore treatment center.[37] By 1891, direct rail service linked it with the silver mines of Neihart and the coal producing towns to the southeast. Abundant water power and the coal produced in nearby Belt, Stockett, and Sand Coulee, made the town a strategic location for smelting and refining. More than 1,500 men found basic employment at the works of the Boston and Montana Copper Smelting and Refining Company and the American Smelting and Refining Company.[38]

Helena ranked fourth in population after Butte, Great Falls, and Anaconda. The town lost 3,000 inhabitants during the nineties as loss of business and financial interests brought a decline in employment. In addition, the abandonment of many surrounding mining

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[35] Ibid., p. 2049.

[36] Ibid., p. 2009.

[37] Ibid., p. 2135.

[38] Ibid.

centers and the attractive power of Butte to the south and Great Falls to the north, resulted in decreased trade and commerce.

The new settlement paralleling the east-west G. N. line affected the town pattern in the northwestern part of the state. The young town of Kalispell, county seat of the newly created Flathead County and division point of the G. N., grew to 2,526. Rail service focused the mining and lumbering centers in the region toward the town. The rapidly developing agricultural Flathead Valley was also tributary to Kalispell. New settlement along the plains portion of the G. N. is not apparent on the 1900 town map.

Recent settlement indicated by the postal additions in the Red Lodge coal mining district is reflected in the growth and appearance of centers in Figure 32. Red Lodge grew from 624 in 1890 to 2,152 in 1900. Branch line rail service helped it and the smaller towns of Joliet, Carbando and Fromberg become major coal producers.

In the east, Billings surpassed Miles City to become the plains area's largest town. Although it did not attain the status of "Denver of the Northwest" as its promoters hoped, the town did grow from 836 to 3,221 during the nineties. It was the judicial seat of Yellowstone County and the receiving and distributing point for stock throughout central Montana and northern Wyoming. At that time, wool and agricultural products were becoming increasingly more important export commodities.

The Hierarchy, 1900

The number of Hamlets decreased from 71 in 1890 to 54 in 1900

(Fig. 33). Many of the lost Hamlets had been specialized centers. Falling below the necessary 100 population were the metal mining centers of Comet, Gould, Gloster, Empire, Pioneer, Argenta, Clancy, and Bannack, the coal mining towns of Cokedale, Chestnut, and Timberline, and the military posts at Forts Custer, Shaw, and Maginnis.

After the closing of their mines or the military posts, these former Hamlets were unable to retain population or business establishments. Their role as local trade centers was limited. Improved transportation and communication, and the ability of higher order centers, especially Villages, to extend their trade areas, made these Hamlets unnecessary.

The number of higher order centers generally increased. Villages rose from 28 to 35, Towns from 14 to 18, and Cities declined from 6 to 5. The prevalence of higher order centers was a reflection of increased urbanization.

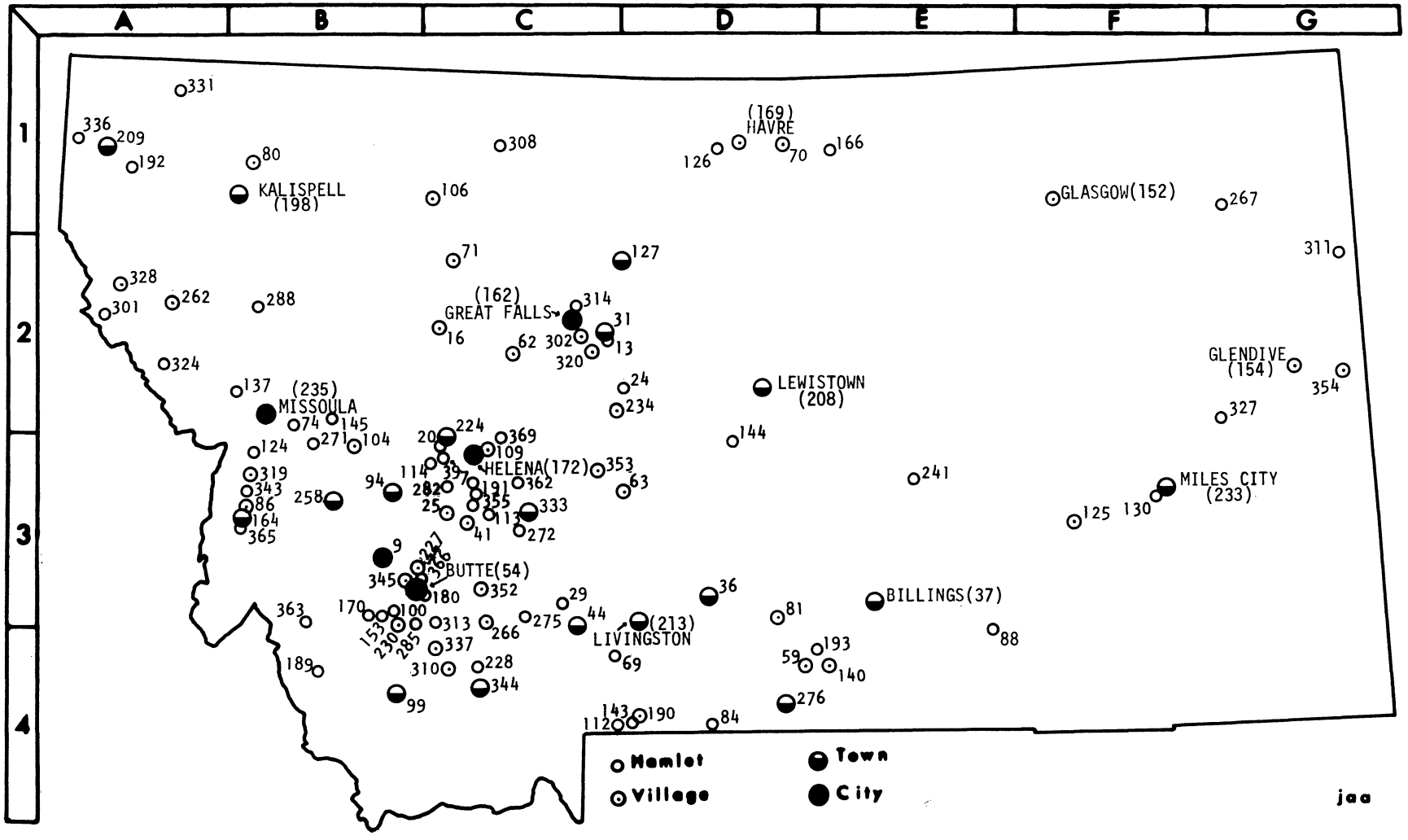

Fig. 33--Hierarchy map, 1900.

CHAPTER IV

ACCELERATED GROWTH AND INFILLING, 1900 TO 1920

Regional Economic Development in Western Montana

Montana's population more than doubled from 243,329 in 1900 to 548,889 in 1920 with the western half continuing to support most of the people. Here, significant economic development accompanied the increased population. All sectors of the economy, primary and secondary production and tertiary exchange and consumption, expanded.

Production

Primary and secondary production in minerals, forest products, and agriculture increased. Copper, zinc, lead, manganese, silver, and gold were the most important metals; coal, the most important nonmetal.

Butte remained the center for metallic mining. Stimulated by World War I, annual copper production rose from 190 million to 323 million pounds between 1895 and 1918.[1] By 1919, approximately 22,000 men were employed in the fifty mines.[2] After discovery of the oil flotation process, Butte became a zinc producer. The same mines were also the state's chief source of silver and gold. Production at other

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[1]Montana, Bureau of Agriculture, Labor, Industry and Publicity, Montana, 1909, p. 193, and Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources of Montana (Helena: Independent Publishing Company, 1919), p. 70.

[2]Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources of Montana (Helena: Independent Publishing Company, 1920), p. 62.

western Montana mining centers, like Philipsburg, Troy, Cooke City, Neihart, and Elkhorn, was minor compared with Butte's.

Three large smelters and a score of small concentrating plants handled the ore produced at the above mines. In 1902, the Washoe copper smelter at Anaconda, the largest plant of its kind in the world, replaced the original smelter works. The Great Falls plant had been converted to copper refining, copper rod, wire, and cable manufacturing, and production of zinc and ferro-manganese. The custom smelter at East Helena handled silver-lead ores from Montana and northern Idaho.

The state's coal production increased from 1.4 million to 4.2 million tons between 1901 and 1918.[3] The fields southeast of Great Falls and those in the Red Lodge area remained major producers. The newly opened coal mines at Roundup challenged these two traditional producers after 1908.

By 1918, the lumber industry employed approximately 7,000 men in the cutting of timber and 5,000 in the associated secondary activities.[4] The 1917 lumber production of 349 million-plus feet was average by the late teens.[5] About 80 per cent of the cut was used in the state; the remainder was sold in Eastern and Canadian markets.[6] In

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[3]Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources (1919), p. 71.

[4]Ibid., p. 76.

[5]Ibid., p. 75.

[6]Ibid., p. 76.

addition to lumber was the production of laths, shingles, stulls, lagging, poles, cordwood, ties, and by-products, such as sawdust and pulp.

A horticultural boom occurred in the Bitterroot and Flathead Valleys. State apple production, centered in these two valleys, rose from 43,939 bushels in 1899, to 702,000 twenty years later.[7] Apples accounted for 90 per cent of the orchard fruit production; pears, plums and cherries accounted for most of the rest. During the first decade of the 1900's, the dry Flathead Valley also became the first major non-irrigated agricultural region in the state. The 1909 opening of the 1.4 million acre Flathead Indian Reservation in the Flathead Valley, made 160 acre parcels available to homesteaders (Fig. 34). The ranks of farmers in these new intensive and extensive agricultural ventures were boosted by nationally circulated propaganda, like The Western Homeseeker, a magazine first published in Missoula in 1905.

Appearance of vegetable canning factories at Bozeman and Stevensville, flour milling operations at Great Falls, Bozeman, Missoula, and Kalispell, meat packing plants at Butte, Great Falls, and East Helena, and ubiquitous creameries, cheese factories, and breweries, reflect the increased secondary economic activity.

Exchange and Consumption

The demand for tertiary activity increased with the greater

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[7]U. S. Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, Abstract of the Census with Supplement for Montana, Thirteenth Census: 1910 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 611, and U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Agriculture, the Western States and Outlying Possessions, Fourteenth Census: 1920, Vol. VI, Part 3 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), p. 105.

Fig. 34--Homesteaders arriving in the Flathead Valley. (Herman Schnitzmeyer photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

primary and secondary employment. Specialization of labor and relatively high per capita productivity resulted in individuals who were more dependent on others for services and able to purchase such services.

Development of the service sector is reflected in mercantile growth between 1900 and 1919. During this period, the number of stores and business houses in Montana, exclusive of banks and professional men, increased from 3,486 to 10,728, or by 321 per cent--a growth rate which significantly exceeded the population increase of 226 per cent.[8]

New types of tertiary activity appeared. State universities at Missoula, Bozeman, Butte, and Dillon were created just before the turn of the century. Tourism and the development of health resorts, spas, and dude ranches developed to serve those with adequate leisure time and money. An expansion of the highway system provided the necessary avenues for a new breed of auto tourers who desired to vacation at Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, or to camp, fish, and hunt in the publically owned mountain areas in the western portion of the state.

Transportation facilities developed to handle the increased interaction between complementary producing and consuming regions. Although the dirt highways of the time were locally important, railroads formed the backbone of the transportation system. They moved local freight and provided the necessary link with distant markets. Figures 35 and 36 show the development of the railnet during the

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[8]Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources (1919), p. 83.

early twentieth century; additions in central, south-central, and extreme eastern Montana were most significant.

Agricultural Development on the Plains

As early as the 1880's, plains area livestock ranchers realized they would eventually have to yield their land to the farmer. In an 1880 address to the Montana Stockgrowers, one cattleman stated, "When homesteaders or preemption settler takes up our occupied lands we will willingly seek new fields for pasture or give up our occupation."[9]

Fertile river valleys were the first to pass to the new agrarian land owners. Opening of former Indian lands to white settlement, such as the Milk River Valley in 1888, helped attract the first farmers--those using irrigation. Widespread agricultural occupation of these lands did not, however, begin until the turn of the century. In 1900 the G. N. began an advertising campaign extolling the potential of irrigation in northern Montana.[10] Legislation such as the Carey Act of 1894, designed to inaugurate irrigation on unappropriated government land, the Federal Reclamation Act of 1902, and the passage of state laws permitting formation of irrigation districts, accelerated the rise of irrigated farming. The Carey Act's Valier, Billings, Big Timber, Teton, Flatwillow, and Little Missouri Projects totaled 172,000 irrigated acres.[11] The Federal Reclamation Act's Milk River

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[9]Rocky Mountain Husbandman, March 11, 1880, p. 2.

[10]Mary Wilma M. Hargreaves, Dry Farming in the Northern Great Plains: 1900-1925 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 227.

[11]Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources (1920), p. 58.

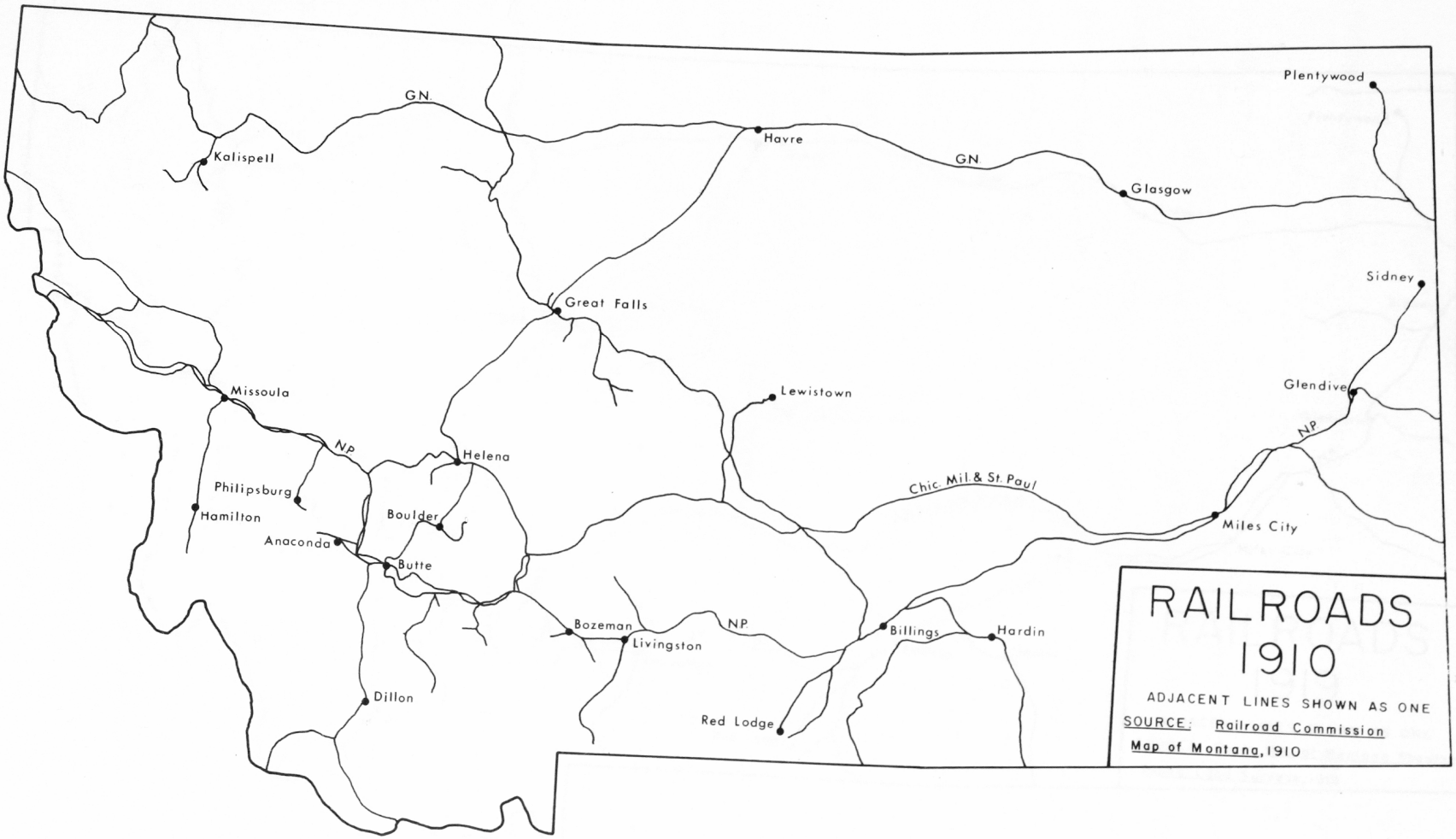

Fig. 35--Railroads, 1910.

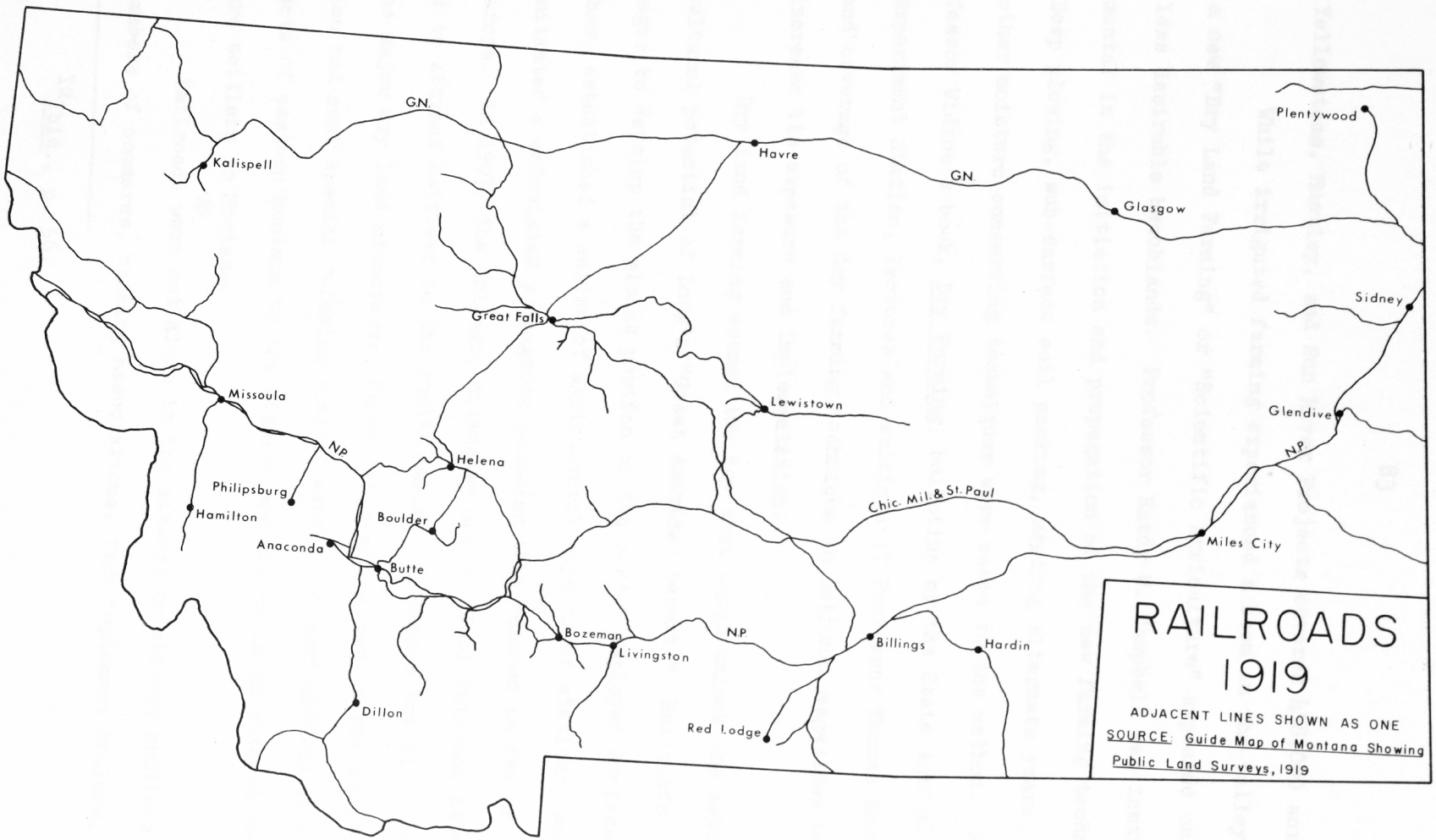

Fig. 36--Railroads, 1919.

Yellowstone, Huntley, and Sun River Projects covered 458,000 acres.[12]

While irrigated farming experienced a boom in the valley areas, a new "Dry Land Farming" or "Scientific Agriculture" appeared on the less desirable benchlands. Professor Hardy W. Campbell was instrumental in the initiation and propagation of the new farming technique. Deep plowing, sub-surface soil packing, seeding alternate years, and other moisture conserving techniques were basic to the method. Professor Widtoe's book, Dry Farming, bulletins by the State Agricultural Experiment Station, lectures and writings of Professor Thomas Shaw, and coverage of the dry farming technique in national magazines helped increase its exposure and implementation.

Dry land farming seemed the key that would unlock the agricultural potential of Long's "Great American Desert." Railroads, eager to develop the plains portion of the state, employed Professor Shaw, established a series of agricultural experiment stations, and initiated a calculated propaganda campaign that reached as far as Europe. In 1907, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad attempted to attract settlers to the Judith Basin, and became the first of the major dry land promoters. Other railroads joined in the promotion and sent special "wishing trains" exhibiting agricultural products of eastern Montana to the Midwest and Europe in an attempt to lure settlers to Montana.

Railroads were not alone in the attempt to attract settlers. Chambers of commerce, banking associations, farm implement dealers,

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[12]Ibid., p. 56.

townsite promoters, land locators, and even the state joined the campaign. The state appropriated $50,000 to advertise its agricultural products at the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific Exposition and was rewarded with numerous prizes.[13] One newspaper boasted that "Gradually people are beginning to understand that Montana is an agricultural state."[14]

The bid for settlers was extremely successful. Montana's eastern plains, traditionally an obstacle and only recently proven fit for livestock, became the destination of tens of thousands of new dry land farmers (Fig. 37). Table 4 shows the number of homestead entries and corresponding acreage filed on in Montana between 1900 and 1919.

The influx of settlers was accelerated by several factors. The Enlarged Homestead Act allowed 320 acres per homestead.[15] Weather was also favorable between 1900 and 1915. These years were exceptionally wet and wheat production averaged approximately 24 bushels per acre and oats about 40 bushels per acre (Table 5). The steel plow, reaper, harrow, and other necessary tools were on the market.[16] A good demand for grains and adequate rail access were also factors (Fig. 38).

The dry land boom continued until 1915 when wheat production averaged 26.5 bushels per acre and oats, 52.0 bushels per acre. The

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[13] Helena Independent, July 11, 1915, page unknown.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Enlarged Homestead Act, Statutes at Large, XXXV, Sec. 1, 639 (1909).

[16] Carl Frederick Kraenzel, The Great Plains in Transition (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955), pp. 134-136.

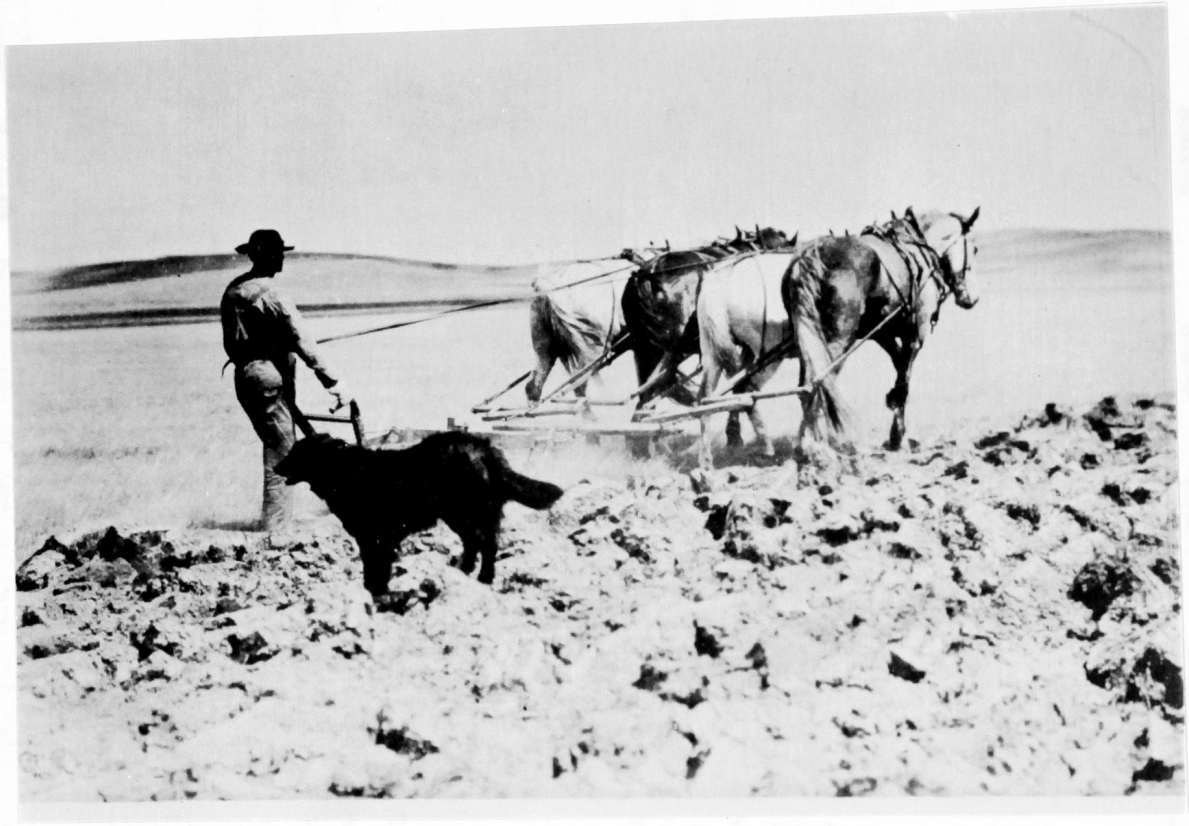

Fig. 37--Dry land farmer, or "Honyocker," on the plains. (L. A. Huffman photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

TABLE 4

MONTANA HOMESTEAD ENTRIES, 1900 TO 1919

Year	Number	Acres	Year	Number	Acres
1900	905	126,141	1910	1,822	277,716
1901	1,211	162,419	1911	2,729	427,982
1902	1,009	140,590	1912	3,307	504,171
1903	1,097	157,061	1913	7,258	1,327,911
1904	974	141,979	1914	11,898	2,523,964
1905	1,366	199,426	1915	10,644	2,198,135
1906	1,333	191,941	1916	11,014	2,308,311
1907	1,629	238,459	1917	14,981	3,180,706
1908	1,456	218,217	1918	14,178	3,191,706
1909	1,610	243,388	1919	8,840	2,005,155
			Total	99,261	19,785,378

Source: Marie Peterson MacDonald, After Barbed Wire (Glendive, Montana: The Frontier Gateway Museum, 1963), p. 24. (Figures from Homesteads, Bureau of Land Management, 1962.)

TABLE 5

MONTANA WHEAT AND OATS STATISTICS, 1900 TO 1919

	Wheat			Oats		
Year	Acres	Bushels	Bu./acre	Acres	Bushels	Bu./acre
1900	72,555	1,929,963	26.6	65,865	2,568,735	39.0
1905	119,469	2,843,326	23.8	178,911	7,389,024	41.3
1910	480,000	10,560,000	22.0	350,000	13,000,000	38.0
1913	870,000	20,673,000	23.8	500,000	21,750,000	43.5
1915	1,590,000	42,180,000	26.5	600,000	31,200,000	52.0
1919	2,221,000	10,729,000	4.8	612,000	6,120,000	10.0

Source: Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources of Montana (Helena: Independent Publishing Company, 1920), pp. 27-28.

Fig. 38--Grain wagons converging at a railroad shipping point, Big Sandy, Montana, circa 1916. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

next year drought struck and lasted for several years. By 1919, most weather stations reported record low amounts of precipitation. Wheat yields fell to 4.8 bushels per acre and total production was only one-fourth that of 1915, even though there were some 630,000 more acres under production.

Due to settlement inertia and increased market demand generated by World War I, settlers continued to arrive despite the great possibility of their failure. Low yields, however, soon forced out even the most persistent. Many went bankrupt, retreating to the plains towns. As many as 60,000 may have left the state.[17]

For those familiar with the ways of the plains, it was expected that drought would follow a wet period. The new settlers had made the mistake of equating weather with climate. The dry land farmers may not only have been deceived by the weather for as Webb stated, "Dry farming, like many other phases of development in the West, has suffered from the over emphasis and misrepresentation of land boomers and speculators"[18] (Fig. 39).

The Patterns, 1900 to 1920

Post Offices and Towns, 1900 to 1910

Postal additions between 1900 and 1910 were most numerous in two general areas: the extreme eastern portion of the state and a hundred mile wide northwest-southeast trending zone just east of the

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[17]K. Ross Toole, lecture in history class, "Montana and the West," University of Montana, Missoula, March 1, 1972.

[18]Walter Prescott Webb, The Great Plains (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936), p. 373.

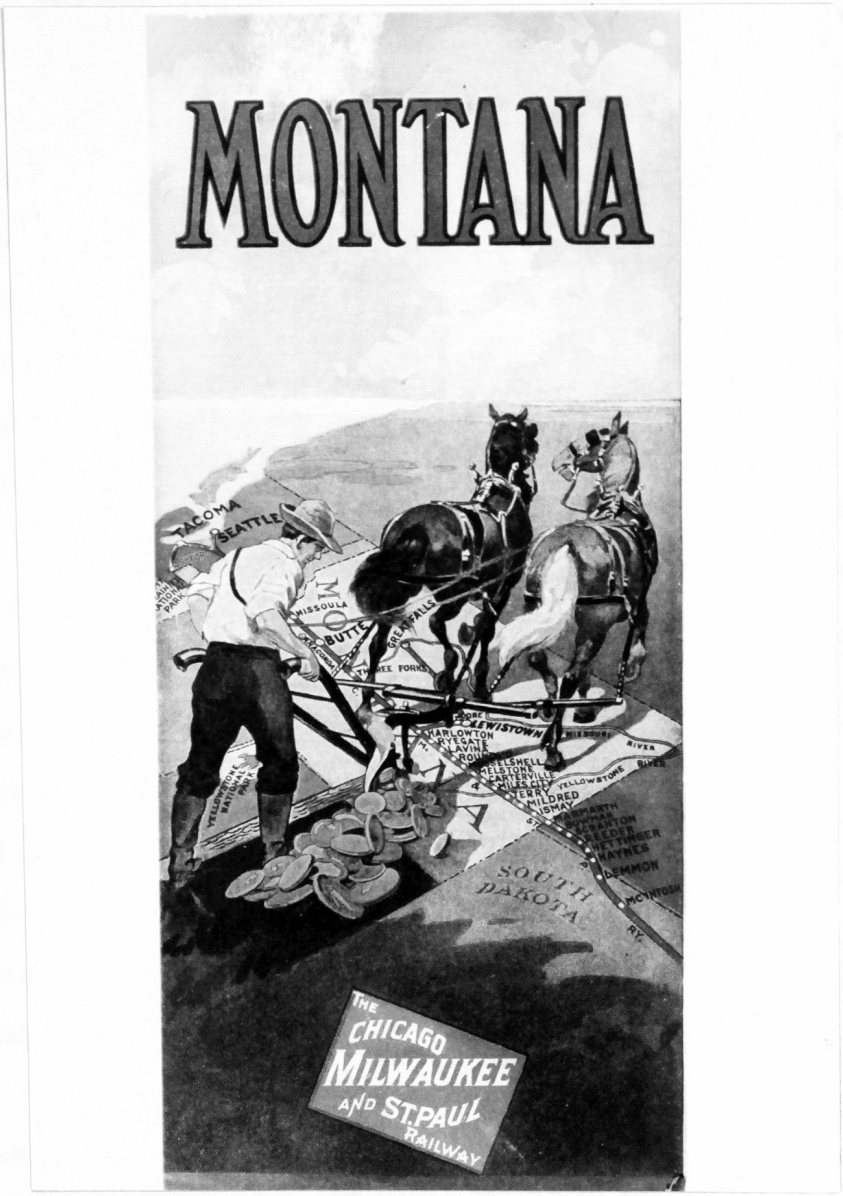

Fig. 39--Cover of booklet, "Montana," issued by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway, February, 1917. (Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena).

mountains (Fig. 40). Other additions were along recently completed rail lines. The main concentration of new offices in the east was in the northeast corner. Here, new dry land farming techniques were successful on the fertile chestnut and chernozem soils (Fig. 41). The same type soils covered much of the piedmont area immediately east of the mountains. This region also attracted and held agricultural settlement. Postal additions in the west were scattered and, except for the new offices along the rerouted G. N. in northwestern Montana, were not indicative of major new settlement.

Western economic development brought growth to previously existing centers. Butte, although growing more slowly than during the previous decade, continued to dominate with 39,000 (Fig. 42). During this decade, Missoula became the state's third largest center as its population increased to 12,869, a change of almost 300 per cent. At the same time, Kalispell grew to more than 5,000. Helena regained some of the population lost during the previous decade and had 12,515 residents by 1910. Most newly appearing towns in the west were small. The only new town with more than 1,000 inhabitants was Whitefish, division point of the rerouted G. N.

Growth of Lewistown from 1,096 to 2,992 and the appearance of local small centers dominated development in the state's central portion during the decade. By 1910, Lewistown was served by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad and became the center for the rapidly developing Judith Basin. It was the supply point for the mining centers to its north and for the dry land farmers throughout the basin. The appearance of rail towns to the south of Lewistown,

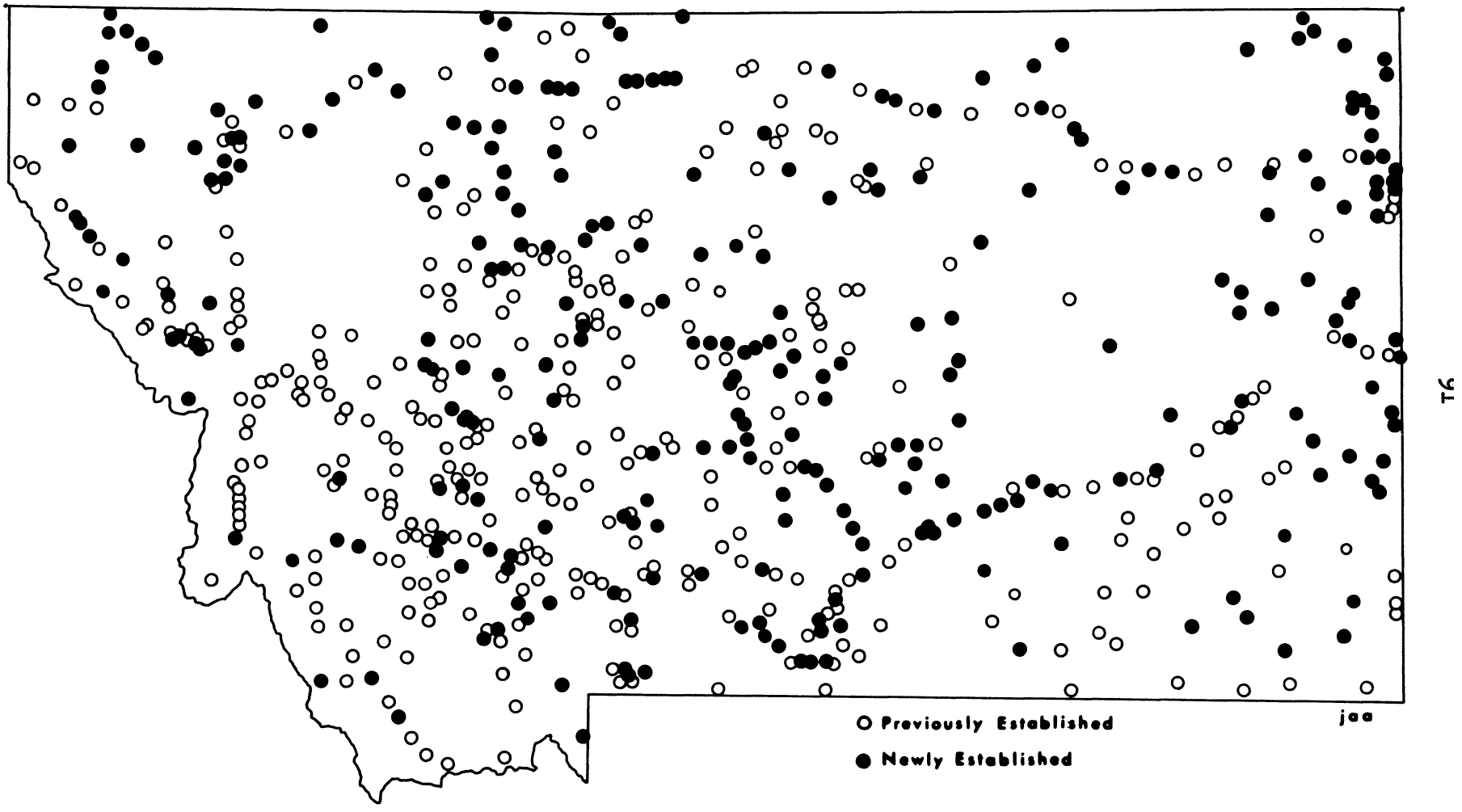

Fig. 40--Postal map, 1910.

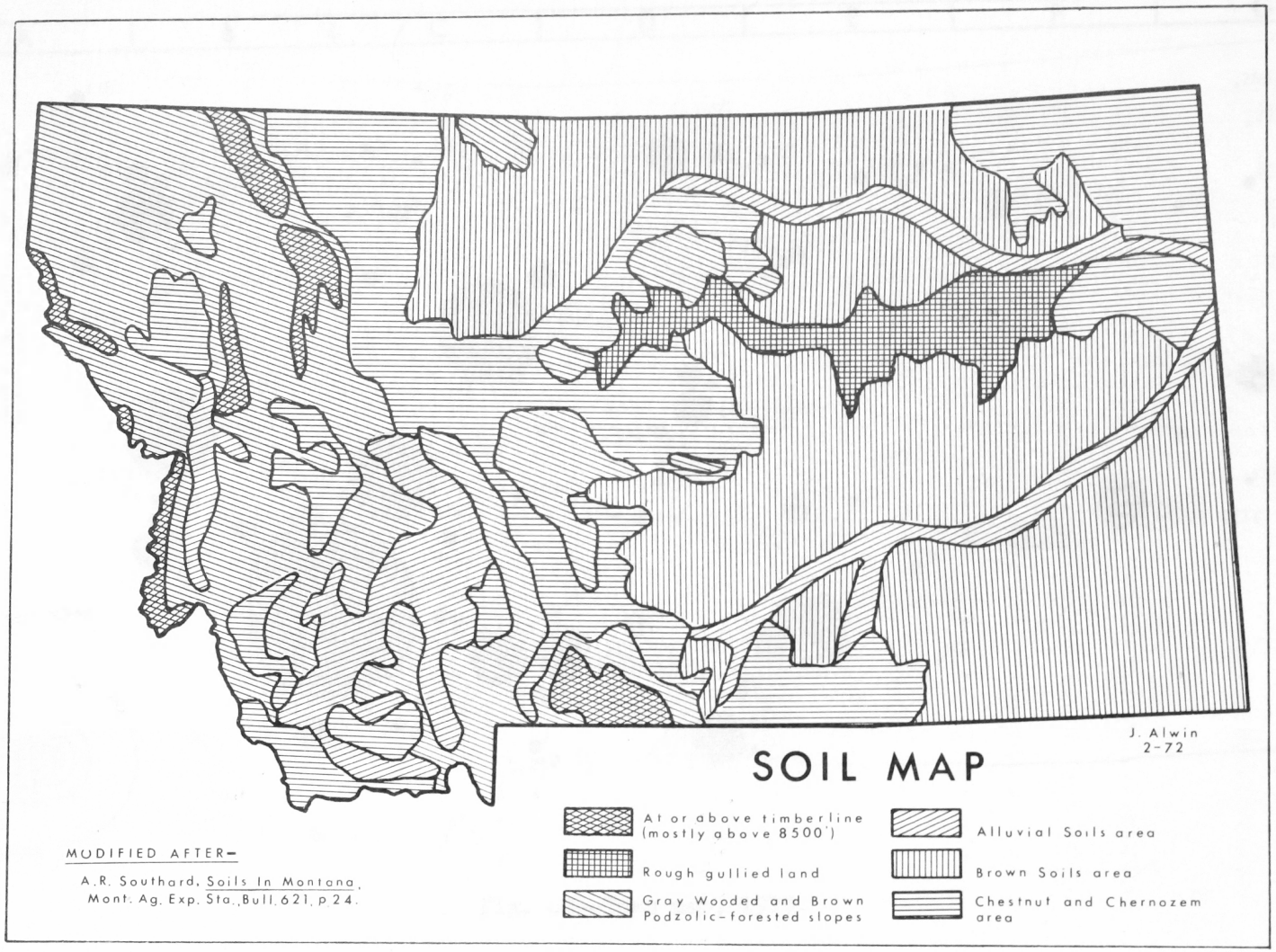

Fig. 41--Soil map.

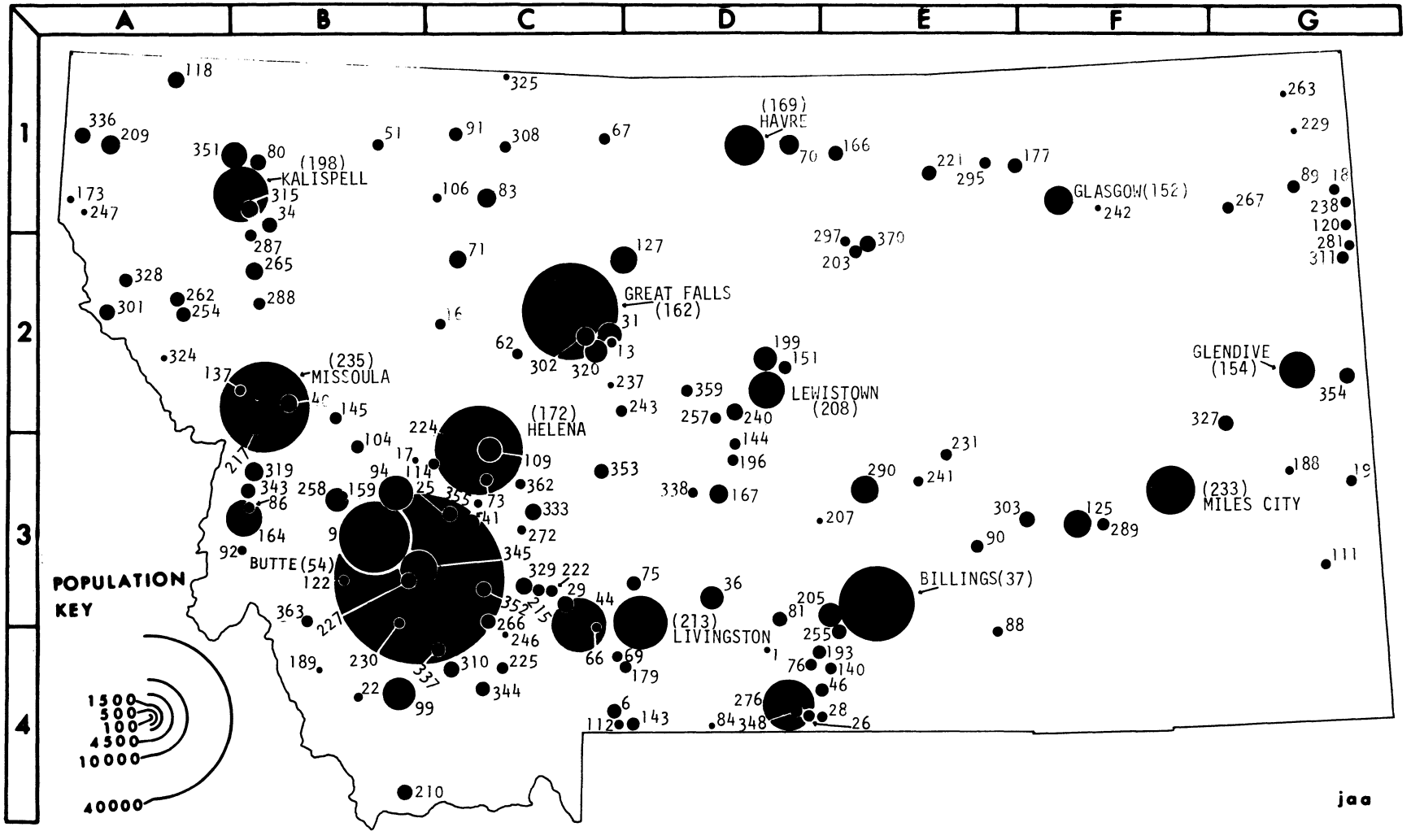

Fig. 42--Town map, 1910.

such as Philbrook, Moore, Judith Basin, and Harlowton, with their clusters of grain elevators, attested to the new agricultural occupation of the land.

The same rail town-grain elevator relationship helps explain the appearance of new centers along the plains area trunk rail lines. Horse and wagon transportation limited the distance for grain hauling to a railway to ten or fifteen miles.[19] This limiting factor encouraged the development of a string of new rail towns in the north, Malta, Saco, Hinsdale, Nashua, Mondack, Bainville, and others; each served as a collection point for locally produced grain. The rise in plains area grain farming is reflected in the increased concentration of elevators in the plains counties. In 1900, 35 per cent of the state's 28 grain elevators were in plains or plains-dominated counties.[20] By 1910, 52 per cent of the state's 66 grain elevators were in the plains.[21]

A similar linear arrangement of towns developed along the more southerly N. P. route. Here, the older centers of Billings, Miles City, and Glendive stood out as larger nodes in the string of centers. Like the two larger plains towns to the north, Havre and Glasgow, they were more than grain collection points. Billings, with 10,031 residents, was the undisputed distributing and manufacturing center

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[19]Isaiah Bowman, The Pioneer Fringe, American Geographical Society, Special Publication No. 13 (New York: American Geographical Society, 1931), p. 70.

[20]Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources (1920), p. 114.

[21]Ibid., p. 115.

of eastern Montana. The 1910 R. L. Polk Gazetteer describes the town as the:

> . . . distributing point for 10,000,000 acres of agricultural land, the eastern Montana coal fields, the Northern Wyoming oil fields and the Cooke city mineral belt. It is the annual collecting point for the crop of 1,000,000 acres of winter wheat, 8,000,000 pounds of wool, 250,000 head of livestock, 200,000 tons of sugar beets, 500,000 bushels of potatoes and 150,000 boxes of apples. . . . a $50,000 iron foundary and vehicle factory . . . a packing house . . . brewery of 30,000 barrel capacity, mattress, broom, glove, sash, door, and interior finishing factories.[22]

In addition to being a transportation center, Miles City was the state's leading cattle and wool shipping point.[23] The town was also the headquarters for the range horse market. Sales of feral horses which had been recaptured and trained gained importance during the Boer War. They continued to all branches of the United States Army and averaged $125,000 monthly in 1910.[24] Another railroad division point, Glendive, grew as a stock shipping center and key town in the Lower Yellowstone irrigation project.

The Hierarchy, 1910

Between 1900 and 1910, the number of Hamlets increased from 54 to 72 and Villages from 35 to 56; Towns decreased from 28 to 16, and Cities increased by 2 to total 7. Most new Hamlets, Villages, and Towns were in the east and a new City appeared in both the eastern

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[22]R. L. Polk and Company, Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory, Vol. XVII (St. Paul: R. L. Polk and Company, 1910), pp. 2497-2498.

[23]Ibid., p. 2701.

[24]Ibid.

(Billings) and western (Kalispell) portions of the state (Fig. 43).

Greater agricultural population on the plains created a need for more Hamlets and Villages to serve as local trade centers. Even though they had small populations, these new towns provided a range of goods generally found only in large centers. Bainville was an example of these seemingly "overdeveloped" small towns. Although it and the western Hamlet of Augusta had approximately equal populations, Bainville had twice the number of establishments, including high order newspaper and banking facilities (Table 6). The "overdevelopment" in these small plains area central places is probably a reflection of greater dispersed rural population within their tributary areas.

The greater occupation of the land in the plains also brought a need for more higher order centers. Havre and Glasgow in the north, and Glendive and Forsyth in the south grew from Villages to Towns. The Towns of Laurel and Roundup appeared for the first time. Billings became the first City in the eastern half of the state. Each of these centers was situated on major rivers and rail lines.

Development in the Flathead Valley dominated changes in the state's western portion. Kalispell, despite its loss of through rail service, rose from Town to City status. The Town of Whitefish developed fifteen miles to the north as the division point on the rerouted G. N. Appearances of the new Villages of Polson, Bigfork, and Sommers and the Hamlets of Rollins and Ronan reflect the overall regional development.

As during the previous decade, many western mining centers declined. The former mining Towns of Belt, Marysville, Philipsburg,

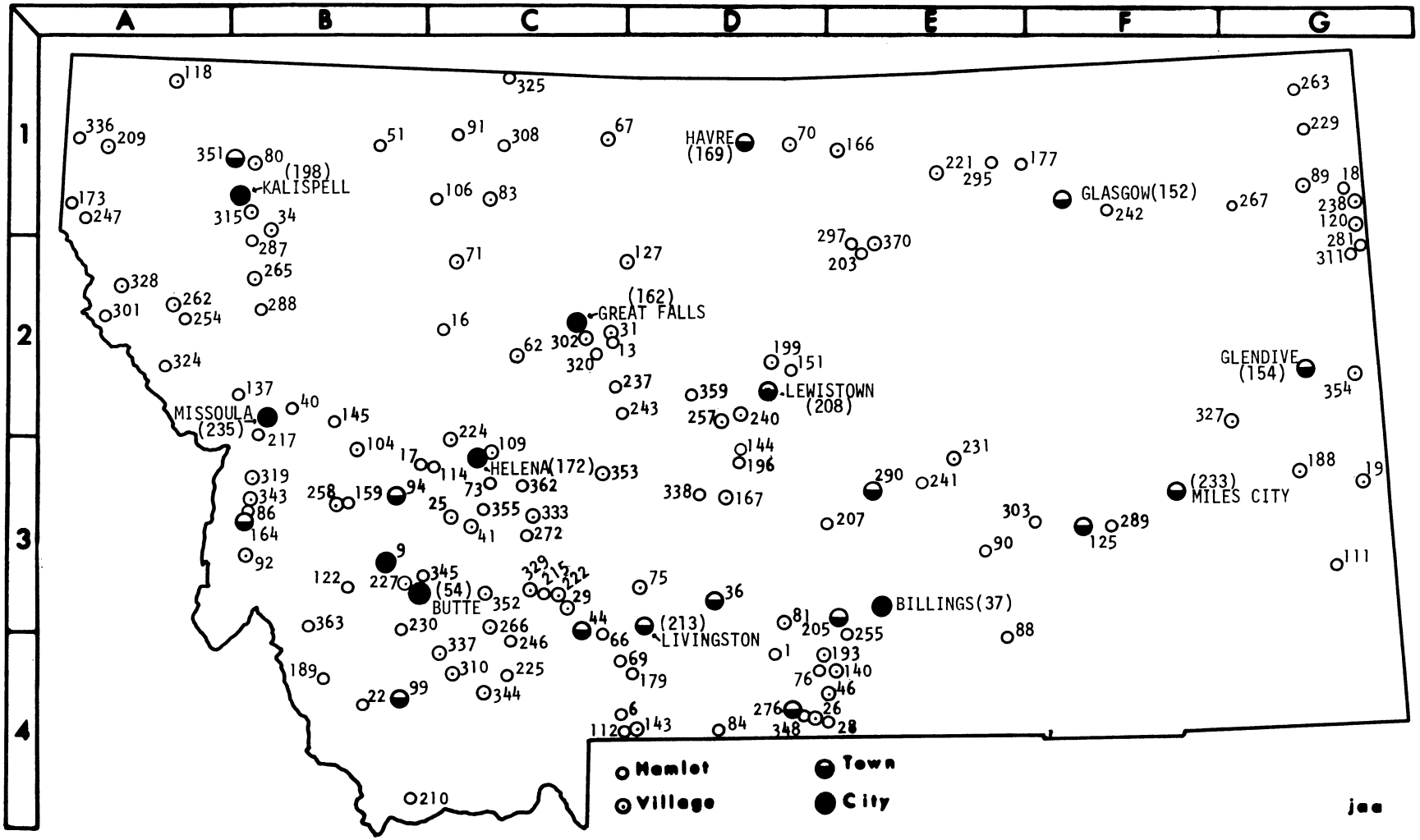

Fig. 43--Hierarchy map, 1910.

TABLE 6

ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE HAMLETS OF BAINVILLE AND AUGUSTA, 1910

Bainville		Augusta	
Establishment type	Number	Establishment type	Number
Bank	2	Dentist	1
Newspaper	1	General Store	1
Dentist	1	Hotel	1
General Store	2	Meats	1
Hotel	1	Saloon	1
Meats	1	Blacksmith	1
Saloon	3	Livery	1
Blacksmith	2	Fruits and Notions	1
Livery	1	Dry Goods	1
Hardware	1	Barber	1
Restaurant	2	Saw Mill	1
Tailor	1	Total	11
Lumber	1		
Grain Elevator	2		
Total	21		

Source: R. L. Polk and Company, Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory, Vol. XVII (St. Paul: R. L. Polk and Company, 1910), pp. 2489-2490.

and Virginia City declined to Village status. Mining Villages and Hamlets such as Hecla, Rimini, Elkhorn, and Castle fell below the necessary 100 population and were not mapped.

Towns, 1920

The last major influx of settlers occurred between 1910 and 1920. Montana's population grew from 376,053 to 548,889 during that decade. During the next fifty years, the state population increased by less than 150,000 according to the 1970 census.

The larger population of 1920 resulted in statewide growth of previously existing towns. More important, however, was infilling

between existing centers. Much of this infilling occurred along rail lines in the plains (Fig. 44).

The trickle of arriving dry land farmers prior to 1910 became a flood during the next ten years. Many of those who arrived after 1910 settled in the state's central and northern plains areas. In just ten years, the swift growth brought twenty-two new centers along a 400 mile section of G. N. track in the northern plains between Cut Bank and Bainville. Similar additions appeared along other sections of track.

The new agricultural occupation on the plains was reflected in an increase in the number of grain elevators in the state and a more than proportional increase on the plains. In 1910, 52 per cent of the state's 66 grain elevators were in plains or plains dominated counties; by 1920, these figures had risen to 85 per cent of 539.[25] A possible link between grain elevators and town growth is suggested by development of the northern plains towns of Scobey and Wolf Point. In 1912, Scobey had a population of 25; Wolf Point claimed 60 inhabitants and neither had a grain elevator.[26] Eight years later Scobey had 1,170 residents and 4 grain elevators; Wolf Point's population was 2,098 and grain elevators totaled 5.[27]

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[25]Montana, Department of Agriculture and Publicity, Resources (1920), p. 116.

[26]R. L. Polk and Company, Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Montana Gazetteer and Business Directory, Vol. XVIII (St. Paul: R. L. Polk and Company, 1912), pp. 2724 and 2749.

[27]R. L. Polk and Company, Montana State Gazetteer and Business Directory, Vol. XXII (St. Paul: R. L. Polk and Company, 1921), pp. 342 and 371.

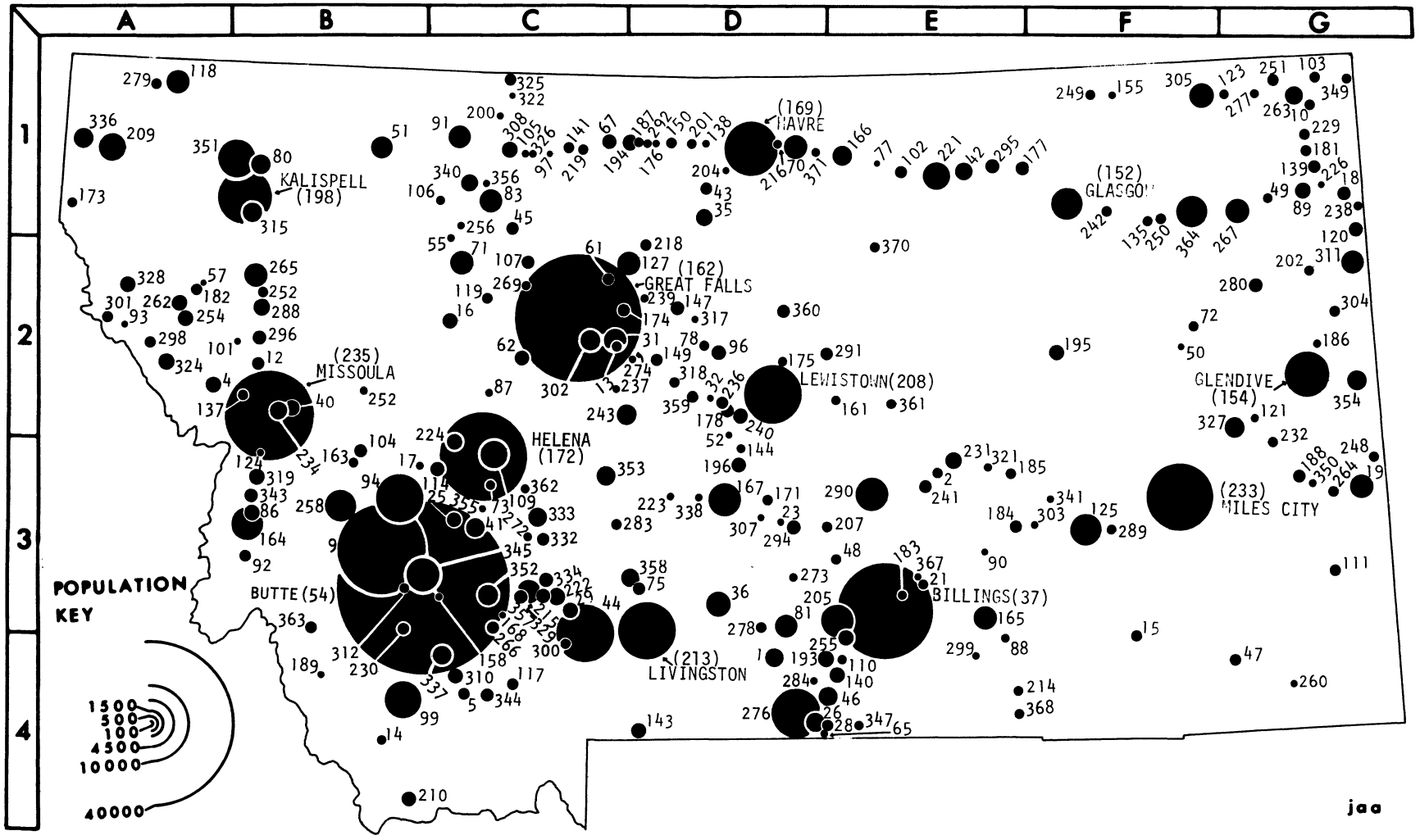

Fig. 44--Town map, 1920.

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The continued regimentation of eastern towns, "lined up densely like pearls on a string," clearly illustrated Kraenzel's "sutland" and "yonland" plains settlings.[28] The sutland is the area of most dense settlement, generally string-like and located along major transportation routes. Larger towns are found within these sinuous bands. The yonland is the area between the linear sutlands. There, transportation is generally poorer and only small centers exist. In the east, proximity of major settlement and rail lines, and the existence of only small scattered towns between rail lines is obvious. Here, the densely settled sutland and its rail service encircle the thinly settled Isolated Eastern Interior, or yonland.

Western development was not as spectacular as that in the east. The Butte-Anaconda cluster still dominated. Butte reached its maximum census population with 41,611, a mere 2,000 increase over the 1910 population. Anaconda's growth also slowed, adding only about 1,000 inhabitants. Great Falls, hub for a radiating web of rail lines, almost doubled its population to more than 24,000.

The linear arrangement of centers is not as obvious in the west. There, rugged topography limited such development. The most pronounced lineation appeared along the Flathead and Bitterroot railroad branch lines which extended north and south, respectively, from Missoula.

The Hierarchy, 1920

Between 1910 and 1920, the number of Hamlets almost doubled

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[28]Christaller, Central Places, p. 58 and Kraenzel, Transition, pp. 194-211.

from 73 to 136; Villages increased from 56 to 91, Towns from 16 to 26, and Cities decreased from 7 to 6 (Fig. 45).

The increase in Hamlets and Villages was most obvious in the fertile northern piedmont and northeast portions of the state. As during the previous decade, the areas of chernozem and chestnut soil attracted and held the greatest agricultural populations.

Small local trade centers were still necessary in 1920. In that year, only 36 per cent of Montana's farms had automobiles.[29] The percentage among new dry land farmers was probably even less. With trucks on only 2 per cent of the state's farms, the horse and wagon remained the primary means of transporting grain to the railroads.[30] This limiting factor also made proximity to a town elevator an economic necessity.

Complementary regions for these small railroad towns suggest an elliptical form. Close spacing of these towns, particularly in the northern piedmont, limited railroad "frontage." This long-lot-type arrangement was the most efficient for funneling locally produced, transport sensitive grain to shipping points.

The number of higher order centers on the plains also increased. Chinook, Malta, Sidney, Harlowtown, and Choteau all changed to Town status. The Towns of Scobey, Wolf Point, and Hardin appeared for the first time and Lewistown became the plains' second City.

Without exception, plains Towns and Cities were located on

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[29]U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Agriculture, Fourteenth Census, p. 50.

[30]Ibid.

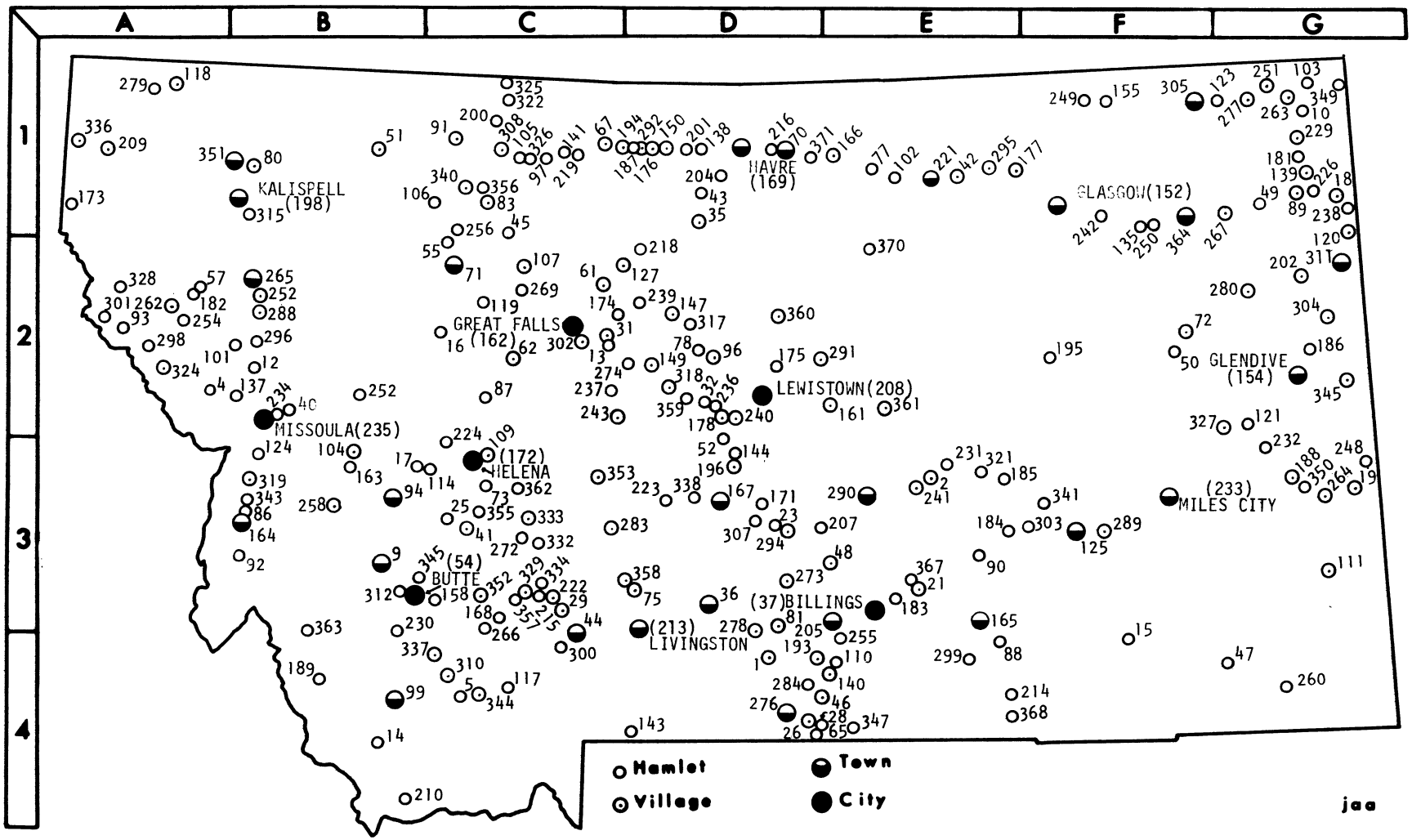

Fig. 45--Hierarchy map, 1920.

rail lines and within the sutland. Consistent with Kraenzel's theory, these centers had all the facilities associated with large Towns. In the plains region, concentration of business and industrial establishments and educational, governmental, and social functions were located in these larger centers.

Development in western Montana was not as swift and spectacular as that in the east. Rather, it was more of an adjustment which brought both declines and rises in the hierarchical level of centers.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

I desire no future that will break the ties of the past.
--George Eliot

Montana's town pattern resulted from unique and/or constantly changing relationships between spatial forces generated by such diverse factors as topography, perception and location of resources, technology, transportation, Indians, corporate activity, state and national governmental policy, national mood and events, weather, and inertia of settlement. Although all were important, transportation (railroads) had the most direct and positive influence on the pattern in the east. Topography, particularly major valleys and rivers, exerted the greatest force in the west.

An Historic Core of settlement formed in southwestern Montana by 1870 (Fig. 46). Centrifugal forces from this Core brought an outward expansion of settlement. The diffusion of towns followed in the wake of the advancing frontier. As the frontier moved east, these centrifugal forces became centripetal about an isolated Eastern Interior. The high gradient of the isochrons around this region attests to the retardation of the frontier advance. In 1900, this region was void of major settlement; twenty years later, it still lacked large centers.

Exploitation of the land was the central theme in the development of the pattern of towns. Development was focal, linked to inter-

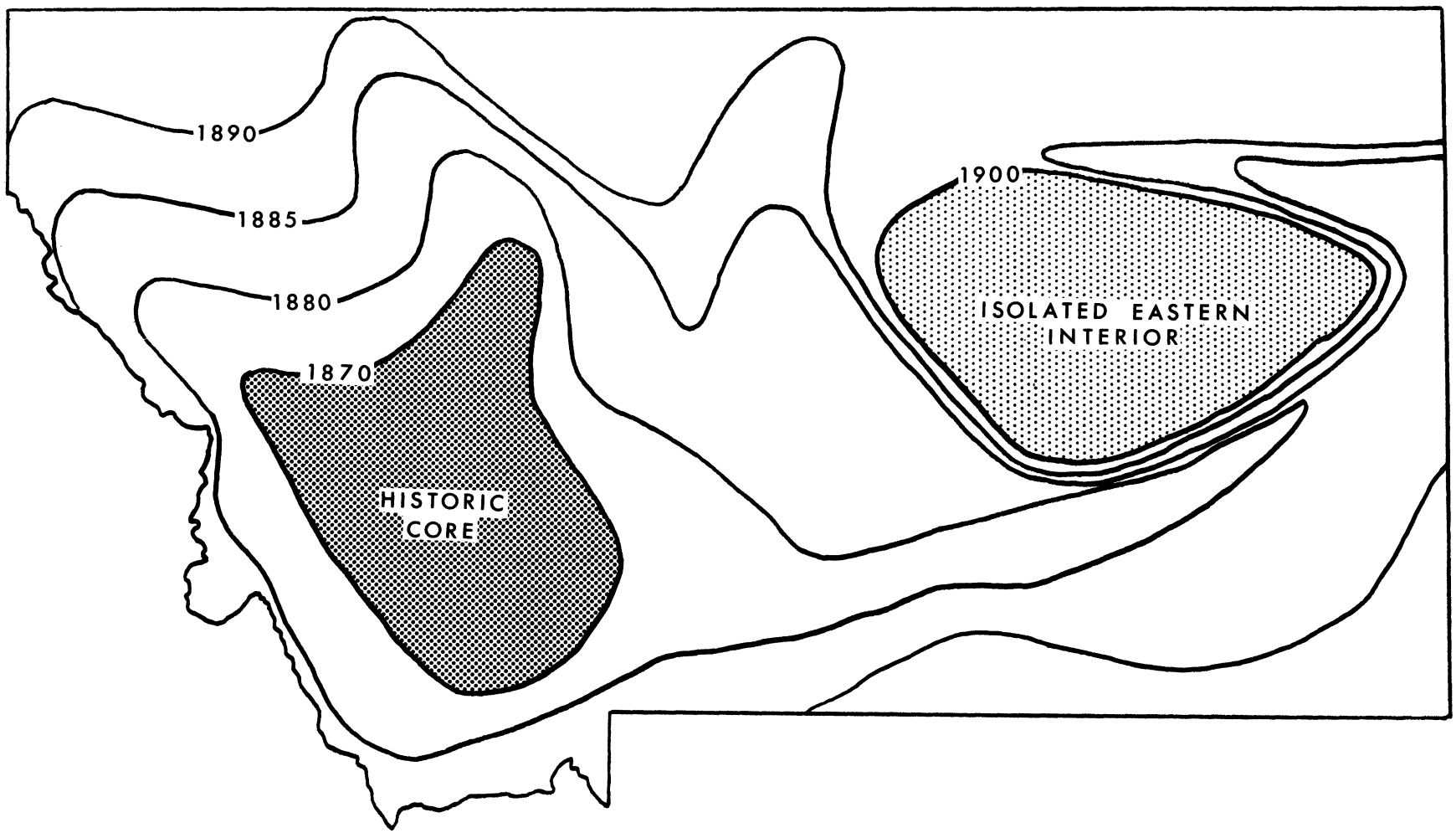

Fig. 46--Map of settlement expansion.

action and transportation within and between towns and hinterlands. The distribution of centers at any time represented the most efficient arrangement for extracting wealth with the technology available. Towns were then, and still are, unique vehicles to achieve this end. Towns disappear if they are unable to produce profits.

The study indicates that further research is needed; the following points should be considered:

1) A study that covers 147,000 square miles over a period of sixty years must omit and generalize.[1] More intensive studies, involving shorter time spans are needed. Geographic-historic studies of the town pattern in smaller regions, such as the Bitterroot, Gallatin, and Upper Yellowstone Valleys and the Judith Basin, are also needed.
2) Maps of historic post office locations appear to be valid tools for tracing the spread of human habitation. Further use of post office locations in similar studies in other states and time periods would test its full value.
3) The simplified hierarchical town classification helped explain the evolving pattern of towns. A more sophisticated central place study might help one to better understand the patterns.
4) The swift growth of Montana's town pattern was the result of a society recreating itself in an accelerated fashion. Such a compacted history offers unique opportunities to the social scientist. This "almost yesterday" development is more easily studied and documented than similar development in other areas of the country. Thus far, geographers have not generally concerned themselves with these early, dynamic phases of the West.

During a span of less than one man's life, from 1860 to 1920, Montana's town pattern evolved from a single river fort, to a network of 263 centers. These clusters of concentrated human habitation became the most distinct and modified elements on the new cultural

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[1]Perhaps historical geographers need a term such as "square-mile-years" to express the intensive or extensive nature of their studies. The 8,820,000 square-mile-years (147,000 square miles x 60 years) indicates the extensive nature of this study.

landscape. A potential exists today for an equally rapid appearance of additional, larger, and even more distinctive townscapes. Regional and national power requirements, government population redistribution programs, increased national awareness of amenities, and more efficient long distance transportation may result in a greater urban population.

APPENDIX

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
1	Absarokee	D-4	. .[a]	. .	. .	. .	100	600
2	Absher	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
3	Adobetown	C-4	. .	100	. .	. .	. .	. .
4	Alberton	A-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	500
5	Alder	C-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
6	Aldridge	C-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	250	. .
7	Alhambra	C-3	. .	. .	100	100	. .	. .
8	Alzada	G-4	. .	. .	100	. .	. .	. .
9	Anaconda	B-3	. .	. .	3,975	9,453	10,134	11,668
10	Antelope	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	285
11	Argenta	B-4	. .	. .	200	. .	. .	. .
12	Arlee	B-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
13	Armington	C-2	. .	. .	. .	150	200	200
14	Armstead	B-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	130
15	Ashland	F-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
16	Augusta	C-2	. .	. .	150	300	250	500
17	Avon	B-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	100
18	Bainville	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	225	396
19	Baker	G-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	1,067
20	Bald Butte	C-3	. .	. .	. .	200	. .	. .

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
21	Ballantine	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
22	Bannack	B-4	381	232	250	. .	150	. .
23	Barber	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
24	Barker	D-2	. .	. .	150	250	. .	. .
25	Basin	G-3	144	. .	. .	1,400	400	375
26	Bearcreek	D-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	302	744
27	Beartown	B-2	355	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
28	Belfry	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	300
29	Belgrade	C-3	. .	. .	. .	118	561	499
30	Belmont	C-2	. .	225	. .	. .	. .	. .
31	Belt	C-2	. .	. .	200	3,500	1,158	967
32	Benchland	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
33	Big Elk	D-3	. .	. .	100	. .	. .	. .
34	Big Fork	B-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	500	. .
35	Big Sandy	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	589
36	Big Timber	D-3	. .	. .	265	800	1,022	1,282
37	Billings	E-3	. .	. .	836	3,221	10,031	15,100
38	Blackfoot City	B-3	499	. .	100	. .	. .	. .
39	Blossburg	C-3	. .	. .	175	175	. .	. .
40	Bonner	B-2	. .	. .	225	. .	600	600
41	Boulder	C-3	. .	214	1,000	1,078	600	682
42	Bowdoin	E-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	700
43	Box Elder	D-1	. .	. .	200	. .	. .	200
44	Bozeman	C-4	168	894	2,143	3,419	5,107	6,183

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
45	Brady	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	350
46	Bridger	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	514	679
47	Broadus	G-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
48	Broadview	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	191
49	Brockton	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
50	Brockway	F-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	120
51	Browning	B-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	986
52	Buffalo	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
53	Burlington	B-3	. .	. .	344	. .	. .	. .
54	Butte	C-3	241	3,363	10,723	30,470	39,165	41,611
55	Bynum	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
56	Cable	B-3	260	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
57	Camas	A-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
58	Canton	C-3	. .	. .	100	. .	. .	. .
59	Carbonado	D-4	. .	. .	. .	300	. .	. .
60	Carroll	B-3	. .	. .	549	. .	. .	. .
61	Carter	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
62	Cascade	C-2	. .	. .	100	300	300	465
63	Castle	D-3	. .	. .	383	400	. .	. .
64	Cedar Creek Mines	A-2	1,486	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
65	Chance	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
66	Chesnut	C-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	150	. .
67	Chester	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	402
68	Chestnut	C-2	. .	. .	175	. .	. .	. .

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
69	Chimney Rock	D-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	200
70	Chinook	D-1	. .	. .	300	500	780	1,217
71	Choteau	C-2	. .	. .	200	500	550	1,043
72	Circle	F-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
73	Clancy	C-3	. .	. .	100	. .	250	300
74	Clinton	B-2	. .	. .	. .	250	. .	. .
75	Clyde Park	D-3	. .	. .	100	. .	400	352
76	Coalville	D-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	. .
77	Coburg	E-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
78	Coffee Creek	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	225
79	Cokedale	D-4	. .	. .	284	. .	. .	. .
80	Columbia Falls	B-1	. .	. .	. .	900	601	611
81	Columbus	D-3	. .	. .	. .	350	521	987
82	Comet	C-3	. .	. .	250	. .	. .	. .
83	Conrad	C-1	. .	. .	102	. .	888	988
84	Cooke	D-4	. .	. .	. .	300	200	100
85	Corbin	C-3	. .	. .	. .	102	. .	. .
86	Corvallis	B-3	. .	. .	150	250	300	500
87	Craig	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
88	Crow Agency	E-4	. .	. .	100	100	200	100
89	Culbertson	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	528	547
90	Custer	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	150
91	Cut Bank	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	400	1,181
92	Darby	B-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	150	325

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
93	Debrogia	A-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
94	Deer Lodge	B-3	788	941	1,463	1,324	2,570	3,780
95	Demersville	B-1	. .	. .	100	. .	. .	. .
96	Denton	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	431
97	Devon	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	125
98	Diamond City	C-3	460	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
99	Dillon	B-4	. .	. .	1,012	1,530	1,835	2,701
100	Divide	B-3	. .	. .	. .	100	. .	. .
101	Dixon	B-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
102	Dodson	E-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	365
103	Dooley	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
104	Drummond	B-3	. .	. .	100	300	300	300
105	Dunkirk	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
106	Dupuyer	C-1	. .	. .	. .	500	150	200
107	Dutton	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	350
108	East Gallatin	C-3	310	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
109	East Helena	C-3	. .	. .	500	1,500	1,000	1,500
110	Edgar	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
111	Ekalaka	G-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	433
112	Electric	D-4	. .	. .	150	200	150	. .
113	Elkhorn	C-3	. .	. .	900	600	. .	. .
114	Elliston	C-3	. .	. .	. .	300	200	450
115	Emmettsburg	B-3	133	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
116	Empire	C-3	. .	. .	350	. .	. .	. .

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
117	Ennis	C-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
118	Eureka	A-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	603	1,082
119	Fairfield	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
120	Fairview	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	513
121	Fallon	G-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	125
122	Fishtrap	B-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	150	. .
123	Flaxville	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
124	Florence	B-3	. .	. .	100	100	. .	100
125	Forsyth	F-3	. .	. .	308	400	1,398	1,838
126	Fort Assiniboine	D-1	. .	450	660	150	. .	. .
127	Fort Benton	D-2	367[b]	1,618	624	1,024	1,004	1,065
128	Fort Custer	E-3	. .	739	582	. .	. .	. .
129	Fort Ellis	C-4	. .	267	. .	. .	. .	. .
130	Fort Keogh	F-3	. .	600	614	150	. .	. .
131	Fort Logan	C-3	. .	136	. .	. .	. .	. .
132	Fort Maginnis	D-2	. .	. .	300	. .	. .	. .
133	Fort Missoula	B-2	. .	. .	271	. .	. .	. .
134	Fort Shaw	C-2	473	. .	275	. .	. .	. .
135	Frazer	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
136	French Gulch	B-3	155	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
137	Frenchtown	B-2	. .	. .	. .	350	150	200
138	Fresno	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
139	Froid	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	410
140	Fromberg	E-4	. .	. .	. .	400	200	520

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
141	Galata	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
142	Gallatin	C-3	152	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
143	Gardiner	D-4	. .	. .	. .	100	350	400
144	Garneill	D-3	. .	. .	. .	100	200	150
145	Garnet	B-2	. .	. .	. .	200	300	. .
146	Garrison	B-3	. .	. .	150	. .	. .	. .
147	Geraldine	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	354
148	German Gulch	B-3	239	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
149	Geyser	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	230
150	Gildford	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
151	Giltedge	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	450	. .
152	Glasgow	F-1	. .	. .	338	450	1,158	2,059
153	Glendale	B-3	. .	678	371	150	. .	. .
154	Glendive	G-2	. .	. .	720	1,200	2,428	3,816
155	Glentana	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
156	Gloster	C-2	. .	. .	400	. .	. .	. .
157	Gould	B-2	. .	. .	250	. .	. .	. .
158	Grace	C-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
159	Granite	B-3	. .	. .	1,310	. .	150	. .
160	Grantsdale	B-3	. .	. .	150	. .	. .	. .
161	Grassrange	E-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	262
162	Great Falls	C-2	. .	. .	3,979	14,930	13,948	24,121
163	Hall	B-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
164	Hamilton	B-3	. .	. .	. .	1,257	2,440	1,700

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
165	Hardin	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	1,312
166	Harlem	E-1	. .	. .	. .	150	383	721
167	Harlowton	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	770	1,856
168	Harrison	C-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
169	Havre	D-1	. .	. .	. .	1,033	3,624	5,429
170	Hecla	B-3	. .	. .	300	200	. .	. .
171	Hedgesville	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
172	Helena	C-3	3,106	3,624	13,834	10,770	12,515	12,037
173	Heron	A-1	. .	. .	125	. .	135	200
174	Highwood	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
175	Hilger	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
176	Hingham	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	154
177	Hinsdale	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	400	400
178	Hobson	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	400
179	Hoffman	D-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	. .
180	Homestake	C-3	. .	. .	. .	150	. .	. .
181	Homestead	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
182	Hot Springs	A-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
183	Huntley	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
184	Hysham	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	360
185	Ingomar	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
186	Intake	G-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
187	Inverness	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
188	Ismay	G-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	175	344

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
189	Jackson	B-4	. .	. .	. .	200	150	100
190	Jardine	D-4	. .	. .	. .	600	. .	. .
191	Jefferson City	C-3	104	210	200	100	. .	. .
192	Jennings	A-1	. .	. .	. .	100	. .	. .
193	Joliet	E-4	. .	. .	. .	150	389	440
194	Joplin	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	500
195	Jordan	F-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	450
196	Judith Gap	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	275	522
197	Junction	E-3	. .	. .	250	. .	. .	. .
198	Kalispell	B-1	. .	. .	. .	2,526	5,549	5,147
199	Kendall	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	1,000	. .
200	Kevin	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
201	Kremlin	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
202	Lambert	G-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	287
203	Landusky	E-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	. .
204	Laredo	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
205	Laurel	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	806	2,239
206	Laurin	C-4	. .	. .	150	. .	. .	. .
207	Lavina	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	300
208	Lewistown	D-2	. .	. .	325	1,096	2,992	6,120
209	Libby	A-1	. .	. .	. .	500	630	1,522
210	Lima	B-4	. .	. .	358	. .	600	476
211	Lincoln	B-2	187	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
212	Lions City	B-3	. .	259	. .	. .	. .	. .

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
213	Livingston	D-4	. .	. .	2,850	2,778	5,359	6,311
214	Lodge Grass	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
215	Logan	C-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	327
216	Lohman	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
217	Lolo	B-2	. .	. .	100	. .	300	. .
218	Loma	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
219	Lothair	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
220	Maiden	D-2	. .	. .	400	. .	. .	. .
221	Malta	E-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	433	1,427
222	Manhattan	C-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	591
223	Martinsdale	D-3	. .	. .	200	. .	. .	100
224	Marysville	C-3	. .	. .	1,489	1,500	600	400
225	McAllister	C-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	. .
226	McCabe	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
227	Meaderville	B-3	. .	. .	1,075	1,500	500	. .
228	Meadow Creek	C-4	. .	. .	200	125	. .	. .
229	Medicine Lake	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	292
230	Melrose	B-4	. .	. .	200	200	170	200
231	Melstone	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	350	477
232	Mildred	G-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
233	Miles City	F-3	. .	629	956	1,938	4,697	7,937
234	Milltown	B-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	502
235	Missoula	B-2	300[c]	300[c]	3,426	4,366	12,869	12,668
236	Moccasin	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
237	Monarch	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	102
238	Mondack	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	150
239	Montague	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	125
240	Moore	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	573	355
241	Musselshell	E-3	. .	. .	110	130	250	350
242	Nashua	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	272
243	Neihart	D-2	. .	. .	125	833	268	749
244	New Chicago	B-3	. .	127	150	. .	. .	. .
245	New York Gulch	C-3	343[c]	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
246	Norris	C-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	. .
247	Noxon	A-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	. .
248	Ollie	G-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
249	Ophiem	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
250	Oswego	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
251	Outlook	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	295
252	Ovando	B-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
253	Pablo	B-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	275
254	Paradise	A-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	400	500
255	Park City	E-4	. .	. .	100	. .	500	500
256	Pendroy	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
257	Philbrook	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	250	. .
258	Philipsburg	B-3	. .	299	1,058	995	1,109	1,724
259	Pikes Peak	B-3	280[c]	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
260	Pinielle	G-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
261	Pioneer	B-3	280[c]	271	100	. .	. .	. .
262	Plains	A-2	. .	. .	300	100	481	452
263	Plentywood	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	888
264	Plevna	G-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	241
265	Polson	B-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	700[c]	1,132
266	Pony	C-4	. .	. .	300	650	369	242
267	Poplar	G-1	. .	. .	200	100	250	1,152
268	Powderville	G-3	. .	. .	200	. .	. .	. .
269	Power	C-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	110
270	Prickly Pear	C-3	223	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
271	Quigley	B-3	. .	. .	. .	150	. .	. .
272	Radersburg	C-3	311	169	200	150	200	150
273	Rapelje	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	225
274	Raynesford	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
275	Red Bluff	C-3	. .	. .	150	150	. .	. .
276	Red Lodge	D-4	. .	. .	624	2,152	4,860	4,515
277	Redstone	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
278	Reedpoint	D-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
279	Rexford	A-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
280	Richey	G-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	400
281	Ridgelawn	G-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	. .
282	Rimini	C-3	. .	. .	200	250	. .	. .
283	Ringling	C-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	200
284	Roberts	D-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
285	Rochester	B-4	. .	. .	. .	200	. .	. .
286	Rocker	B-3	. .	. .	300	. .	. .	. .
287	Rollins	B-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	. .
288	Ronan	B-2	. .	. .	. .	175	475	600
289	Rosebud	F-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	300
290	Roundup	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	1,513	2,434
291	Roy	E-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
292	Rudyard	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
293	Rumsay	B-3	. .	. .	306	. .	. .	. .
294	Ryegate	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	405
295	Saco	E-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	425
296	St. Ignatius	B-2	. .	. .	200	. .	. .	500
297	St. Pauls	E-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	143	. .
298	St. Regis	A-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
299	St. Xavier	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
300	Salesville	C-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
301	Saltese	A-2	. .	. .	. .	100	500	250
302	Sand Coulee	C-2	. .	. .	500	1,000	900	900
303	Sanders	F-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	450	100
304	Savage	G-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
305	Scobey	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	1,170
306	Selish	B-1	. .	. .	300	. .	. .	. .
307	Shawmut	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	125
308	Shelby	C-1	. .	. .	. .	100	300	537

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
309	Sheldon	B-1	. .	. .	300	. .	. .	. .
310	Sheridan	C-4	. .	150	207	581	399	538
311	Sidney	G-2	. .	. .	. .	100	345	1,400
312	Silver Bow	B-3	425	. .	200	. .	. .	100
313	Silver Star	C-4	. .	. .	100	200	. .	. .
314	Smelter	C-2	. .	. .	300	250	. .	. .
315	Somers	B-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	850	650
316	South Butte	B-3	. .	. .	801	. .	. .	. .
317	Square Butte	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
318	Stanford	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
319	Stevensville	B-3	. .	. .	400	346	796	744
320	Stockett	C-2	. .	. .	. .	1,600	1,400	. .
321	Sumatra	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
322	Sunburst	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
323	Sun River	C-2	. .	. .	200	. .	. .	. .
324	Superior	A-2	. .	. .	. .	100	100	600
325	Sweet Grass	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	100	300
326	Telstad	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
327	Terry	G-3	. .	. .	100	130	500	794
328	Thompson Falls	A-2	. .	. .	200	300	325	508
329	Three Forks	C-3	. .	. .	100	. .	674	1,091
330	Timberline	C-4	. .	. .	300	. .	. .	. .
331	Tobacco	A-1	. .	. .	. .	150	. .	. .
332	Toston	C-3	. .	. .	250	. .	. .	259

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
333	Townsend	C-3	. .	. .	245	446	759	897
334	Trident	C-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	500
335	Trout Creek	A-2	. .	. .	100	. .	. .	. .
336	Troy	A-1	. .	. .	. .	150	500	763
337	Twin Bridges	C-4	. .	. .	200	500	491	755
338	Twodot	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	150	125
339	Unionville	C-3	158	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
340	Valier	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	613
341	Vananda	F-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
342	Vestal	C-3	. .	140	. .	. .	. .	. .
343	Victor	B-3	. .	. .	. .	136	374	400
344	Virginia City	C-4	867	624	675	568	467	342
345	Walkerville	B-3	. .	444	1,743	2,621	2,491	2,391
346	Warmsprings	B-3	. .	. .	190	. .	. .	. .
347	Warren	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	300
348	Washoe	D-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	300	. .
349	Westby	G-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	253
350	Westmore	G-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	150
351	Whitefish	B-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	1,479	2,867
352	Whitehall	C-3	. .	. .	. .	500	417	629
353	White Sulphur Springs	C-3	. .	. .	640	446	417	574
354	Wibaux	G-2	. .	. .	. .	300	487	611
355	Wickes	C-3	. .	200	800	100	125	125
356	Williams	C-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100

number	town	key	population					
			1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
357	Willow Creek	C-3	116	. .	. .	. .	. .	375
358	Wilsall	D-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	700
359	Windham	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	200	200
360	Winifred	D-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	262
361	Winnett	E-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	316
362	Winston	C-3	. .	. .	. .	200	150	150
363	Wisdom	B-4	. .	. .	. .	100	250	350
364	Wolf Point	F-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	2,098
365	Woodside	B-3	. .	. .	. .	200	. .	. .
366	Woodville	B-3	. .	. .	. .	100	. .	. .
367	Worden	E-3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	100
368	Wyola	E-4	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	250
369	York	C-3	. .	. .	. .	245	. .	. .
370	Zortman	E-2	. .	. .	. .	. .	800	200
371	Zurich	D-1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	125

[a]Indicates no population figures available, or population below 100, or town did not exist at that time.

[b]Estimated 1860 population of 100.

[c]Estimated population.

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